

The Handbooks of Moral and Political Philosophy



Number 5
Postmodern Ethics & Politics

**The Handbooks of Moral and Political Philosophy
Five - Postmodern Ethics & Politics
by Roger Solt**

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INTRODUCTION

The term "postmodern," and its variants, such as "postmodernism" and "postmodernity," are among the catch phrases of our time. We are said by some to have entered the postmodern age. At minimum, it is believed that there has been a decisive postmodern turn in art and thought. In other quarters all of this is dismissed as sound and fury, signifying very little. "Postmodern" is, at minimum, an ambiguous and paradoxical term. It doesn't offer a positive expression for either a period or a set of ideas; instead, these are defined negatively, as coming after "the modern" (itself an ambiguous enough concept). And if "the modern" is equated, as it frequently is, with the current and contemporary, then the paradox implicit in the idea of the postmodern becomes clear -- the postmodern becomes identical with an ever receding future.

But this objection makes too much of the phrase and its form. A more straightforward explanation is that "the modern" refers to a discrete historical era and the prevailing set of ideas associated with that era. Understood in this sense, the modern era can have an end, and we may have even entered a new period, still only vaguely understood, which for lack of a better label, we call the postmodern. The plausibility of this historical transition depends in part on how broadly or narrowly one defines modernity. In its classic formulation, the modern is contrasted with the ancient and the medieval.

According to this three-part historical division (a division not without its critics), the Italian Renaissance which began in the fourteenth century marked the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern age. Going along with this line of thought, the key historical development is the rise of secular humanism and the gradual displacement of religion as the central human concern. Sometimes, though, modernity is defined more narrowly. It is often seen to date from the rise of modern science in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Finally, the modern can be defined even more narrowly as encompassing the two centuries from 1789 to 1989 -- from the French Revolution to the fall of the Soviet Union. Given this narrower definition of the modern, the notion that we've entered the era of the postmodern seems more plausible. The postmodern can thus be defined as a period at the end of (at least radical) ideology, the end of revolutionary politics. It also can be equated with the coming of what sociologist Daniel Bell called "post-industrial" society and what others have termed the information age. This is a tenable story, but it is, it should be insisted, based on a more narrow interpretation of modernity than is commonly held. If secularization and science are seen as the defining traits of the modern, then the notion that we have entered a new, postmodern period in which these concepts are increasingly obsolete seems a good deal less likely.

Historical speculation aside, the postmodern can be defined in a different way, as a school of philosophical thought, and it is with this latter interpretation that this introduction and this handbook are mainly concerned. Postmodern thinkers are said to challenge many of the standard assumptions of modern thought. "Masters of suspicion," they have proceeded to "deconstruct" the framework of traditional Western metaphysics. The first great postmodern thinker is commonly said to be Friedrich Nietzsche, a German philosopher who lived from 1844 to 1900. The second major postmodern thinker is another German philosopher, Martin Heidegger, who lived from 1889 to 1976. Nietzsche and Heidegger have been vastly influential, but the philosophy of postmodernism is said to really come into its own in the work of such contemporary French philosophers as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Jean-Francois Lyotard. It is with the work of these five men and that of the American neopragmatist philosopher Richard Rorty that this handbook is mainly concerned. There are other individuals, including the sociologist Jean Braudillard and the philosopher Gilles Deleuze, who might have been included as representative postmodern thinkers. But the six figures who I have included are probably the most prominent, and they certainly illustrate a wide range of postmodern themes.

Even this idea of a postmodern philosophical school reveals certain ironies. The idea of postmodernism was developed in France in the 1970s and rose to its present prominence in America only in this decade. Nietzsche had, of course, been dead for the better part of a century. (In fact, he became insane in 1889, squarely in the middle of the two centuries of alleged "modernity.") And Heidegger produced his major philosophical work in the 1920s, also decades before the postmodern became a fashionable concern. The other four philosophers who this handbook treats are at least contemporaries. But neither Foucault nor Derrida ever explicitly embraced postmodernism, and Rorty, after initially identifying himself with the concept, later on repudiated it. This leaves Lyotard, who popularized the term, as the only explicitly "postmodern" thinker in the group.

Still, this overstates the case. The reason why this set of thinkers is so often grouped together is that they share many common themes (as well as some tremendous differences). As six of the more prominent thinkers of the past century or so, the ideas of these six individuals are worth studying based on their own intrinsic interest (and argumentative utility), but they are especially important because of the degree to which they shape contemporary debates, especially within the academy. "Postmodernism" may (and I think ultimately will) prove to be an ephemeral phenomenon. But for the present, it is the most prominent of contemporary philosophies, a view that cannot be ignored by anyone seriously interested in current moral and political theory.

In most of this introduction and in the evidence sections which follow it, each of these figures is considered individually -- this seemed to be preferable to an extended treatment of "postmodernism" in the abstract. Still, before turning to the individual thinkers, I want to consider some of the common "postmodern" themes which can be said to unite them. The postmodern, of course, must inevitably be defined with relation to the modern. Thus, I want to briefly consider what might be regarded as some of the central tenets of modern thought and how postmodernism departs from them. Of course, however modernity is defined, it encompasses a wide range of views and innumerable controversies. Still, certain common belief patterns are widely seen as characteristically modern.

A first element of the modern world view is humanism -- a central focus on human concerns and welfare. Whereas the Middle Ages were the age of faith, an era in which religious issues were more central, the modern period has been increasingly secular and human-centered. A second typical modern theme is individualism. An emphasis on the individual rather than on the community is sometimes said to be the defining difference between modernity and antiquity. A third premise is universalism. Human rights and other moral standards are seen as applying universally. This is a trait shared by such otherwise diverse modern systems of ethics as Kantianism and Utilitarianism. A fourth modernist belief involves confidence in human rationality. The world is believed to be objectively knowable through the use of reason and experience. This contrasts with the medieval reliance on revelation and faith. A fifth characteristic of modernity is the prominence (even the dominance) of science. Detailed empirical observation and the experimental method are seen as the best ways to discover truth. A sixth typically modern emphasis is on the value of freedom. Personal, political, and economic freedom are all seen as important and possible. Seventh is the belief in progress. Things are generally seen as improving over time. Eighth, modernity is associated with the belief in democratic problem solving. Democracy has emerged as the preferred form of government and is seen both as an end in itself and as a means to effective policy. Finally, ninth, the modern age has placed unprecedented value on the idea of equality. Almost all modern moral theories embrace at least some concept of equal treatment.

No postmodern thinker rejects all nine of these modernist beliefs, but postmodern thought as a whole questions each of them. This questioning will be explored below with reference to each of our six selected thinkers, but here I want to briefly trace the general postmodern "line" with regard to these prototypical modernist ideas.

Postmodern thought tends to be skeptical of humanism. Humanism is seen alternatively as foolish, arrogant, and morally complacent. The unique dignity of mankind is sometimes thought to be an obscene joke after the Holocaust and Hiroshima. But skepticism toward humanism is found in Nietzsche, well before the twentieth century began its bloody career. It developed into a philosophical "post-humanism" in Heidegger and finds expression in the later postmodern philosophers, especially Foucault.

Individualism has many contemporary critics on both the left and the right. Marxists have long indicted the "bourgeois individualism" of capitalistic society; conservatives bemoan the moral license they associate with a decline in group norms. More recently, communitarian thinkers of various stripes have indicted the "radical individualism" they see as destroying community. Postmodern thought has an ambivalent relationship with individualism. Nietzsche and (to a lesser extent) Heidegger are generally seen as arch-individualists. The later postmodernists also display highly individualized styles and personalities. But in Foucault and Derrida there is also a sustained critique of the idea of the "subject" -- that is, the autonomous self, capable of reasoned choice.

Modernist universalism is seen as problematic by almost all of the postmodern thinkers. They tend to be moral and cultural relativists. Still, in both Lyotard and Rorty, there is a defense of something very close to a theory of universal human rights, albeit associated with an antifoundationalist epistemology.

The idea of "antifoundationalism" is central to the postmodern critique of rationality. Descartes is sometimes said to have initiated modern philosophy with his search for an unshakable first principle. Postmodernists, almost by definition, reject this belief in unshakable foundations. They are systematically skeptical of the claims of reason. Lyotard even defines postmodernism as skepticism toward "meta-narratives" -- that is, general theories purporting to explain the order of things.

Along with skepticism toward reason goes a questioning of science. This anti-science attitude is most pronounced in Heidegger, but it is also expressed, in varying degrees, in the rest of the postmodern thinkers.

Postmodern thought also tends to be deterministic. In rejecting the idea of the autonomous subject, it distances itself from a belief in free will and may therefore tend to downplay the value of freedom in other regards.

Postmodernism also tends to be historically pessimistic. The belief in progress is seen as one more myth that is no longer sustainable.

Democracy and democratic problem solving are also regarded with suspicion by all of these six postmodern thinkers, except for Rorty. Heidegger, most notoriously, was a member of the Nazi Party, nor are Nietzsche, Foucault, Derrida or Lyotard generally seen as friends of democracy.

The postmodern thinkers differ radically in their attitude toward equality. Nietzsche and Heidegger were both deeply anti-egalitarian in their ethics and politics. The more recent postmodernists, though, all seem to have political stances fairly far to the political left, making them all egalitarians of sorts.

Perhaps most fundamentally, postmodern thought generally displays a highly critical attitude towards the modern world. Postmodernism implies coming after modernism, but it also suggests a fair degree of anti-modernism. Postmodern indictments of the modern world are various, but the postmodern thinkers as a whole tend to believe that modernity is in a state of crisis -- moral and epistemological, political, ecological, and religious. Each offers, in his own way, a critique of modernity, and it is this radical critique which given their work much of its disruptive edge.

NIETZSCHE

Friedrich Nietzsche was a German philosopher who published his major works between 1872 and 1888. Virtually ignored during his lifetime, Nietzsche has since then become probably the most influential philosopher since Hegel (assuming, at least, that one does not classify Darwin, Marx, or Freud as philosophers). Nietzsche's influence has been extremely diverse. In addition to his influence on postmodernism, he is a pivotal figure in the early history of existentialism. Nietzsche also influenced many of the major literary figures of the twentieth century, including Mann, Hesse, Jung, Yeats, Gide, Malraux, Camus, and O'Neill. The Nazis, fairly or not, also claimed Nietzsche as an intellectual forefather.

Nietzsche's thought is difficult, not because he is hard to read but because he wrote so brilliantly. He employs for the most part an aphoristic style. Rather than writing lengthy, unified essays, he produced books which offer a collage of ideas. His books are divided into sections ranging from a single sentence to a few pages. There is a unified philosophy in Nietzsche (although his thought did develop considerably over time), but his ever shifting emphasis makes it hard at times to discern.

What makes Nietzsche a postmodernist? The first thing is simply his style of writing (something that Derrida stresses in his book on Nietzsche). Hegel, writing in the early nineteenth century, had reduced the world to a philosophical system. Nietzsche was very much opposed to the idea of an all inclusive system because he believed that it distorts the nature of reality. The world is too complex, too multi-faceted to be caught in a series of philosophical formulas (though Nietzsche himself offers some of philosophy's most memorable formulas). What Nietzsche's style conveys is something of the complex, pluralistic, shifting and shimmering nature of reality.

A second, related postmodern theme in Nietzsche is his "perspectivism." In one of his more famous formulations, Nietzsche states that there are no facts, only interpretations. No one, including philosophers, can assume an all-encompassing perspective from somewhere above life. The world can be approached from a multitude of angles, but there is no single, superior vantage point.

His perspectivism and his theory of interpretation display Nietzsche's skepticism toward the idea of truth. (And although not as anti-scientific as some of his successors, Nietzsche's view implies that science too is simply one more perspective.) Nietzsche also, at times, questions the value of truth. What people really need, he sometimes says, is not the truth but sustaining myths and illusions. We possess art, he argued, to prevent us from drowning in reality.

If truth is not the central value for Nietzsche, what is? The answer to this is somewhat ambiguous. The value which Nietzsche contrasts with truth is "life." Illusions are desirable if they are life-enhancing. (one of Nietzsche's early essays is on the advantages and disadvantages of history for life.) In this emphasis on life as the central value (what we might call Nietzsche's vitalism), he displays the influence of an earlier nineteenth century German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer, a thinker who emphasized the central importance of "the will to life." But the latter Nietzsche distances himself from Schopenhauer, arguing that the basic human drive is not the will to life but rather the will to power. For Nietzsche, power seems to mean first and foremost the overcoming of obstacles, the surmounting of challenges. These challenges can be both internal and external, for while the will to power can be expressed in dominating others, it also finds expression in philosophy and art, including perhaps preeminently the art of esthetic self-creation. Still, even in his final works, Nietzsche speaks of life as a kind of ultimate value and criterion. The answer to this riddle may be that in the end Nietzsche came to conflate the ideas of life and power. The "life" that he values (and even reverences) is not simply survival, but rather life as an expression of power and potency, a life of flourishing and fulfillment.

This brings me to a final reason Nietzsche can be considered a postmodernist -- his critique of modernity. Here his central criticism is not surprising given his core values. The modern world is bankrupt because it displays too little life. Modern humans are paralyzed, in part by the exaggeration of rationality and in part by the moral legacy of Christianity. Modern life is banal and obsessed with comfort and security. Yet modernity has also come to a crisis point, which Nietzsche captures in his famous dictum that "God is dead." The Christian worldview, which had been the staple of Western Civilization through two millennia, is no longer sustainable. Nietzsche clearly approves of this development; he thinks that the Christian repudiation of power, sex, and self made it essentially anti-life. But the death of God has also created a tremendous crisis of values. If there is a single central theme in Nietzsche, I believe that it is the need to repudiate the Christian moral system and adopt new, life enhancing values and ideals.

I want to turn now to a consideration of Nietzsche's ethics. Perhaps his strongest influence in this area relates to his relativism and subjectivism. Nietzsche insists that moral standards vary between and within cultures and appears to believe that such moral standards are ultimately subjective. He believed that Kant's ethic was a secularized version of Christianity, and baseless once the metaphysical foundations of Christian belief have been undermined. He was equally dismissive of Utilitarianism and of the view (most fully developed by G.E. Moore in the early twentieth century) that the good is an objectively knowable quality perceived through moral intuition. For Nietzsche, there are two basic kinds of morality: master morality and slave morality. Aristocratic cultures such as ancient Greece display master morality. They equate "the good" with the noble and "the bad" with the base. Slave morality (which for Nietzsche is typified by Christianity) reverses the equation. The low, the humble, the "poor in spirit" became "the good," while the strong and self-assertive became "the evil." One of Nietzsche's central goals is to go "beyond good and evil," to produce another transvaluation of values in the direction of a more aristocratic ethic.

Nietzsche is also a strong moral individualist and a sometime defender of ethical egoism. He rejects Utilitarianism because he doesn't believe that the collective social welfare is the ultimate good. Rather, the goal of mankind should be the production of great individuals. At the end of the Christian era, mankind faces the choice between becoming a more docile and herdlike animal (what Nietzsche calls "the last man") and accepting the challenge of inventing a new form of human greatness. The goal that Nietzsche sets for the previously "all-too-human" species is the creation of the *ubermensch*, variously translated as the "overman" or "superman." Nietzsche explicitly repudiates the idea that the *ubermensch* should be understood in Darwinian, evolutionary terms. Rather, the overman is characterized by "great health," great power and vitality, and supreme artistic creativity.

What does such a moral vision imply for politics? Since Nietzsche offers no systematic (or even semi-systematic) political doctrine, the answer to this question remains unclear. It is far more certain what Nietzsche is against politically than what he is for. What he is opposed to includes most of the political ideas associated with modernity. First and foremost, he is against egalitarianism. Egalitarianism is seen as a form of resentment, a doctrine by which the weak and the sick attempt to undermine the healthy and the strong. It is a doctrine for herdlike "mass men," rather than strong, creative individuals. And democracy is tarred with the same stick; it too reflects what Ortega would later term "the revolt of the masses" against the elite. Fraternity or solidarity of the sort Rousseau recommended is also rejected as a doctrine of the herd, and Nietzsche has similarly disparaging things to say about socialism, anarchism, and feminism.

One could derive a libertarian politics from Nietzschean premises, arguing that individuals should be left alone to fulfill their own natures, but Nietzsche would probably reject such a conclusion himself. He places little if any value on mere "negative freedom" of the Lockean sort (the right to be left alone). Instead, Nietzsche embraces a much more Hegelian view of freedom as adherence to self-set law. In effect, Nietzsche equates freedom with will, the ability to carry out long term purposes. Yet Nietzsche is not simply a conservative authoritarian. His repudiation of Christianity is revolutionary, not reactionary, and he explicitly warns conservatives that there is no going back to the old virtues. Also, Nietzsche is highly critical of the state. Indeed, in his critique of statism, he sounds at times positively libertarian. The state is what keeps us from cultivating our own true natures, from discovering (or inventing) our own highest selves. John Rawls labels Nietzsche's political doctrine as "perfectionism" (a perspective he also ascribes to Aristotle). Perfectionism, in Rawls' terms, views the purpose of politics as the promotion of great cultural achievements, that is, great works of art and thought. (Rawls, of course, rejects this ideal in favor of his own theory of justice.) The Rawlsian notion of perfection does seem to capture an element of Nietzsche's politics, but it should be remembered that for Nietzsche the state is more likely to be an impediment to rather than a means to the achievement of great culture.

Nietzsche admired greatness wherever he saw it, and he praises great political leaders such as Napoleon. And there are times when Nietzsche seems to believe that the moral anarchy of his age calls for a strong political legislator to provide order and discipline to the chaos of the instincts which he viewed as quintessentially decadent. But, more often, it is the philosopher, not the statesman, who is seen as the moral legislator of the future. And taken as a whole, his philosophy may be more plausibly read as a call to turn away from politics and to cultivate one's own particular greatness. In sum, Nietzsche's politics remain ambiguous, and not surprisingly elements of his thought have been embraced by figures ranging from the far left to the far right.

Nietzsche's ideas can be (and have been) indicted at many levels. One common criticism is that he is excessively individualistic, that he gives insufficient attention to the inherently social nature of human beings. He is also condemned for being overly elitist. It is said that he ignores the common humanity and the common human potentials present in all people. And certainly believers in liberty and equality, solidarity and democracy, will find much to object to in Nietzsche's thought. His comments on women are especially notorious, and even his admirers find it difficult to deny that he was rather consistently sexist.

More controversial is the question of Nietzsche's relationship to Nazism. Nietzsche was strongly critical of both German nationalism and of anti-semitism, and it is clear that the Nazis in many ways misrepresented his thought. Still, even if it is fairly clear that Nietzsche would have scorned the Nazis, there are elements in his thought (the emphasis on power and strength, the devaluation of pity and compassion) which parallel elements of Nazi ideology. Perhaps the deepest affinity between Nietzsche and the Nazis is found in their respective condemnations of modernity. Nietzsche may not have favored tyranny, but his rejection of the politically modern values of liberty, equality, and democracy probably helped to pave the way for it.

In the context of value debate, how can Nietzsche's thought best be employed? He is a strong critic of many of the mainstream values, including liberty, equality, and democracy, and he offers forceful indictments of such thinkers as Kant, Hegel, Rousseau, and Mill. In terms of what he upholds, Nietzsche is probably most valuable as a defender of the individual against the claims of society as a whole.

HEIDEGGER

Martin Heidegger is arguably one of the greatest and certainly one of the most controversial of twentieth century philosophers. His greatest notoriety derives from his membership in the Nazi Party from the early 1930s until the end of the second world war. The fact of his membership is undeniable, but its significance remains much debated. His critics view his Nazism as an expression of his underlying philosophy and worldview, but his defenders see it merely as a biographical detail, which while personally reprehensible does not impugn his overall philosophy. The issue of the relation between Heidegger's politics and his philosophy will be discussed below, but for the moment it seems best to put the issue into the background. For like it or not, Heidegger has become one of the most analyzed and influential philosophers of our time, and his thought needs to be confronted on its own merits and not simply dismissed with an *ad hominem*.

Heidegger is considered a postmodern thinker for a number of reasons. The first is that he, like Nietzsche, was profoundly critical of the modern world. Heidegger probably shared to some degree Nietzsche's vision of human life in the modern era growing small and insignificant, but his fundamental indictment of modernity is a good deal more abstract. Humanity, he argues, has lost contact with "Being." Heidegger's notion of "Being" is notoriously difficult to pin down. In technical terms, Being seems to be the ground (or background) out of which all particular beings emerge. (If you imagine away all specific existing things in the world, Being is what is left.) But it is difficult to understand just why this concept is of such intellectual, let alone emotional, significance for Heidegger. So to understand the importance of being for Heidegger, it may be best to pursue a more indirect route. Heidegger was deeply drawn to nature and art. He admired and frequently commented on the romantic poets. He also was attracted to some aspects of religious mysticism. It would no doubt be an oversimplification to dismiss Heidegger as a mystic and to read "Being" as a kind of code word for God or nature. But Heidegger believed that philosophy should be closer to poetry than to science, so it perhaps is legitimate to suggest that his notion of Being is in some ways more a poetic than a strictly logical concept. "Being," one might imagine, refers in Heidegger's thought to an idea of "fundamental reality." And this is a reality which, if not formally identified with God, should still be approached with a certain reverence and respect. So, perhaps for Heidegger to say that modern humans have closed themselves off from Being is to say that they have ultimately lost contact with basic reality.

At any rate, Heidegger is profoundly critical of what he sees as the characteristically modern modes of thought, including science and rationalism. This is a second way in which he is a postmodernist. The modern scientific mentality engages in "instrumental rationality" and "managerial thinking." It views nature as a kind of "standing reserve," a set of resources available for human exploitation. The result is that humans lose their sense of the beauty and multiplicity of things. The world becomes simply an object of technological manipulation.

Scientists and rationalists tend to adhere to a correspondence theory of truth. That is, a statement is true if it corresponds to reality. Heidegger, like most postmodernists, rejects this theory of truth. Instead, Heidegger equates truth with a kind of "unveiling" -- a sudden insight or sense of clarification. Truth takes certain shapes and is revealed to us in different forms at different times. This theory has its similarities to Nietzsche's perspectivism. Again, truth isn't an objective absolute, but rather something we glimpse in varying degrees. Some visions may be fuller and richer than others, but it is the internal coherence of our views rather than their absolute correspondence to an objective reality which is the most for which we can hope. Furthermore, truth is best uncovered not through "reason" or logical analysis, but rather through meditative thinking.

Heidegger's ethical thought is clearly related to his ontology (his theory of being), but it also is an expression of his analysis of the nature of human existence or human "being." For Heidegger, human being is always a "being there." ("Dasein," which means in German "being there" is the term he uses throughout his major work, *BEING AND TIME*, to refer to human beings.) Again, the terminology is quite abstract, but this time, I think, Heidegger's point is clear enough. Humans are there in that they exist in a particular time and place. They are "beings in the world" -- particular, situated creatures. It is this point which is often said to make Heidegger an existentialist. Humans have no innate human nature or essence. Their nature develops as a result of their particular existence (or experience). They are beings who exist in time, and their temporality makes them finite, mortal, and mutable.

This view of human life leads to Heidegger's rejection of humanism and of universalistic ethics. There is no fixed human nature from which to derive moral standards. Rather, Heidegger seems to have believed, as the communitarians do, that we are ultimately grounded in our culture and its traditions and our language. The result of this belief is cultural and moral relativism. This kind of relativism has certain advantages. It recognizes that humans exist within a particular context rather than as disembodied intellects or "ideal observers" somewhere above the sweat and sway of human life. (This overly detached view of the human self is said to contaminate much of modern philosophy, from Descartes to Kant and Bentham.) And recognizing relativism can lead to tolerance and respect for differences. But cultural relativism also has a darker side, which Heidegger's own history helps to illuminate. Rejecting universal standards can lead to narrowly nationalistic and even racist preoccupations. If not all humans possess a dignity grounded in their humanity, then it may be too easy to begin treating them as less than human, a phenomenon displayed in its extreme form by the Nazis. Heidegger was probably not, himself, strongly anti-semitic. But he was, at least in the 1930s, a militant German nationalist, and this nationalism seems not unrelated to his idea that humans derive their basic being from their particular time and place.

If there is, as I have argued, a communitarian side to Heidegger's ethical thought, there is also a more individualistic side. This is captured in Heidegger's notion of "authenticity." An inauthentic life is one which is led unreflectively, in a kind of unthinking conformity to prevailing social standards. "One" acts in a certain way because that is what "one" does; it is the way "they" (or "well") say it should be. The inauthentic individual simply appeals to consensus or popular opinion in justifying his or her actions. The authentic individual, in contrast, takes responsibility for his or her actions, chooses with care and often with anxiety. An authentically chosen life may not be much different externally than one lived inauthentically. Heidegger was not a proto-1960s cultural non-conformist. Authenticity is compatible with following most of the norms of one's culture, so long as these norms are chosen and followed in a thoughtful and voluntary way.

What, then, about Heidegger's politics? Heidegger's ethics lack a very specific content. As long as one chooses resolutely, the Heideggerian ethic of authenticity is compatible with a wide variety of choices. Similarly, his politics may be essentially "decisionistic." That is, Heidegger's philosophy recommends no explicit political decisions; it may simply enjoin us to choose resolutely. A common criticism, of course, is that such a doctrine offers too few moral limits on our political choices. Heidegger thought in the 1930s that the authentic choice available to the German people was to resolutely embrace Nazism. Again, Heidegger's vision of what he called "the inner truth and greatness of National Socialism" was probably a good deal less sordid than the practical reality of Nazism. But Heidegger's "authentic" choice in favor of Nazism is hardly a recommendation of political existentialism.

There may be a different political lesson to be drawn from the writings of the later Heidegger. The older Heidegger, in particular, tended to stress the idea of "releasement" or "letting things be." One of his contemporary commentators, Leslie Paul Thiele, has argued that Heidegger has a positive doctrine of "disclosive freedom" which can stand as a constructive complement to the more familiar doctrines of negative and positive freedom. Disclosive freedom suggests an openness to things, in particular to the objects of nature. This stands in contrast to the typical scientific/technological attitude which regards nature as simply a set of objects to be manipulated. This Heideggerian doctrine has made him popular among radical environmentalists, and a number of authors, including Thiele and Zimmerman, have argued that Heidegger's thought provides the basis for a new environmental politics. The danger here, however, is that Heidegger's later thought, with its emphasis on rejecting willfulness and letting things be, may lead to excessive passivity. Whether the meditative Heideggerian thinker can emerge from his or her contemplations to actually play an effective role in politics remains questionable.

Criticisms of Heidegger are common and tend to occur at the cleavage points between modern and postmodern thought. Thus, Heidegger is indicted for rejecting reason and science and is often labelled as a mystic and an irrationalist. His ethics are criticized for their rejection of universal, humanistic standards and for their lack of specific content. His politics are condemned as elitist, anti-democratic, and authoritarian in principle and as rabidly nationalistic and totalitarian in practice. Or, alternatively, he is criticized for undermining the possibilities of constructive politics and for withdrawing into an apolitical quiescence.

Yet despite these, and many other, articulate indictments, Heidegger remains one of the most influential of twentieth century philosophers. Perhaps his two most influential doctrines have been his critiques of humanism and of technology. These views have found a highly sympathetic audience especially among environmental groups such as the deep ecologists. Heidegger's thought offers a radical vantage point from which to criticize many of the received views of Western philosophy. It is a challenging body of thought which demands attention.

FOUCAULT

Michel Foucault, a Frenchman who lived from 1928 to 1984, was clearly one of the most influential of contemporary thinkers, perhaps the only major philosopher (at least since Sartre) whose works appeared in popular editions both in France and abroad. Despite its popularity, Foucault's thought is in many ways difficult. Part of the difficulty is that while Foucault is widely regarded as a philosopher (he was trained as a philosopher and held academic appointments in philosophy), he rarely addresses, at least explicitly, traditional philosophical issues. Thus, there is no systematic Foucauldian epistemology, ethics, or politics. He clearly has philosophical positions and commitments in all of these areas, but they are usually implicit rather than explicit in his work, or at minimum don't appear to be his central subjects. Foucault's major works take the form of histories. Thus, he offers a history of madness and mental asylums, of clinical medicine, of the prison and penal reform. At his death he was working on a multi-volume "history of sexuality." But while these particular historical concerns tend to be in the foreground, more systematic philosophic issues repeatedly reveal themselves: issues relating to power, knowledge, reason, truth, the self, the social order, and the nature of political resistance.

Foucault is regularly labelled as a postmodernist, and although he did not explicitly embrace the label, it is relatively easy to see why his work is so characterized. First, he shares the postmodern skepticism toward general theories. This is the reason why specific social and political issues are in the foreground of his work. His thought aims at being useful to particular causes and on particular occasions; it offers a kind of "toolkit" for dissident groups rather than a grand philosophical synthesis of the type offered in Hegel or Kant. Second, Foucault is highly critical of modernity. He sees the modern world as a "disciplinary society," a culture saturated with social control.

Third, Foucault's epistemology is distinctly postmodern in flavor. His first major work, *MADNESS AND CIVILIZATION*, offers a sustained assault on the concept of reason. Foucault criticizes the Enlightenment for drawing a strong dichotomy between reason and insanity. By making "reason" into a kind of idol, everything which does not qualify as "reason" is denigrated and marginalized. An even more radical attack appears in his later work in which he conflates the ideas of knowledge and power. According to Foucault, power is traditionally viewed as coercive and knowledge as free and disinterested. But for Foucault, the two are in reality inextricably linked. What is accepted as "true knowledge" is (at least in part) a function of power; the powerful are those who are able to prevail in the conflict of views. And rather than being separate from power, knowledge itself has the power to shape and reshape the social world.

The equation of power and knowledge is a striking doctrine, but its full implications are unclear. A key question is whether this is a theory about the sociology of knowledge or of the ultimate nature of knowledge. If it is the former, it may be important, but it isn't expressive of a radical skepticism toward the idea of "truth." It seems likely that, as Foucault says, power relations do influence what is accepted as true. But the truly radical conclusion would be to believe that power relations actually determine what is true. If this is so, then reality truly is "socially constructed," and Foucault is properly labelled as a radical skeptic.

Foucault lacks a clearly articulated positive ethical theory, but it is relatively easy to describe his ethics in terms of what he rejects. In the first place, Foucault is not a moralist. He sees relations of force -- power relationships -- as ubiquitous and not particularly objectionable. (Power is creative as well as repressive.) For him, the social world is not mainly to be understood in moral terms. It follows from this that Foucault is not an ethical universalist. There are, for him, no objective moral standards of the Kantian sort, binding on all rational agents at all times. (And, of course, for Foucault the very concept of reason itself is suspect.) Foucault is also not a humanist. He seems to reject the idea of a fixed human nature; "man" is simply one shape temporarily on display, and it is one which Foucault seems to find more offensive than inspiring. Foucault is also skeptical of the idea of an autonomous self. He seems to regard the self (or subject) as externally determined by various forces instead of autonomously self-directing. Yet there is also a Nietzschean theme of artistic self-creation found especially in the latter Foucault, giving his moral thought a residual element of individualism.

Foucault's politics are crucially related to his theory of power. By power, Foucault means all relationships of force, and he sees such force relationships as pervading society. Foucault rejects a notion which sees power as primarily vested in a sovereign or a set of laws (a view common to thinkers ranging from Hobbes to Rousseau). This may once have been an accurate description of how power functions, but this "juridical" understanding of power is no longer appropriate to the contemporary world, a world in which power tends to be dispersed and "disciplinary." For Foucault, everyone possesses power, and power is manifested in all kinds of non-state institutions -- in private schools and businesses, hospitals and insane asylums, and perhaps even in clubs and families. Foucault does not deny that the state exercises power (after all, the prison, on which Foucault focuses much attention, is a state institution), but he does deny that it is the main source of power in contemporary society.

Foucault insists that power is creative and constructive as well as repressive, but he still tends to depict power in a negative light. The disciplinary society is one of regimentation, of intense social control, and Foucault's sympathies are clearly on the side of those seeking liberation. But within Foucault's schema there are no clear routes to liberation. (One of Foucault's main points in his study of sexuality is to deny the theory that contemporary society is sexually repressed and that we can be liberated through a freer sexuality.) Democratic politics is not, for Foucault, a preferred road to freedom. Reflection on his theory of power reveals why this is the case. A society, in Foucault's terms, can be democratic yet still be highly repressive, rigidly hierarchical and oppressively controlled. Also, political reform has its dangers. In *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, Foucault describes how, in his view, penal reform went wrong. In the eighteenth century, punishment was cruel and bloody but relatively infrequent. As punishment became "humanized" over the past two centuries it became less severe, less barbaric perhaps, but certainly more ubiquitous. The result is the prison in which more and more persons are confined.

A common criticism of Foucault is that he allows no room for meaningful resistance to power. This, however, is not his view of the matter. He believed that every point at which power is encountered is a potential point of resistance. However, resistance is likely to be most effective on the local level. He remains skeptical of revolutionary transformations. (In his major writings he is consistently anti-Marxist.) Thus, even though reform can be counterproductive, it isn't necessarily to be dismissed. Social life, for Foucault, seems to be a kind of ongoing Hobbesian war of all against all. Since life itself is war, there is no final victory, but there are many battles to be fought and many limited objectives to be gained.

Foucault employs an essentially historical method of analysis, which he alternatively refers to as archeology or genealogy. Thus, not surprisingly, many criticisms of his work focus on his alleged inaccuracies as a historian. His thought is also frequently criticized as overly skeptical, as undermining the possibility of valid truth claims and as obsessed with the irrational. His theory of values is dismissed as nihilistic and his politics as anarchist. Once again, though, Foucault's thought has been highly influential. His idea of localized politics (and his rejection of the public/private distinction) has found favor with many feminists, and he was a kind of patron saint of the gay rights movement, especially its more militant wing.

In the context of value debate, Foucault offers a skeptical voice with regard to such traditional formulations as justice, rights, and democracy. He also stands, however, in a rather ironic way, as a defender of the individual against society. Whatever else, he was certainly not a conservative, and he was a consistent critic of social control in almost all of its forms.

DERRIDA

Jacques Derrida, born 1930, is among the most famous of living philosophers. And the method of interpretation which he has developed, deconstruction, has been profoundly influential in areas ranging from philosophy to literary criticism to cultural studies. Derrida's thought is postmodern in its extreme skepticism toward stable, transparent meanings. Indeed, deconstruction is to an important degree a method for demonstrating the indeterminacy of meaning.

Deconstruction is a term which has entered the contemporary vocabulary, and it is now used in a variety of popular senses fairly remote from what Derrida initially intended. Derrida himself generally applies deconstruction to philosophical texts (his subjects ranging from Plato to Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud). Deconstruction is often said to take an orthodox or mainstream interpretation and to turn it on its head, that is, to show how a contrary or even opposite interpretation can be derived from the same text. By doing this, the inner tensions and unresolved inconsistencies within a work are brought to light, and the "margins of philosophy" are explored.

A second key concept for Derrida is "différance." As applied to language, this notion has two basic meanings. First, it rejects a correspondence theory of meaning in favor of a theory that meaning is grounded in the difference between words. Taken to its extreme, this implies that meanings exist only within language; they don't refer to a relation between words and objects in the "real world." The second meaning of "différance" is related but slightly different. It suggests that meaning is never "present" (that is, transparent or self-evident) but is always and inevitably "deferred." Language is ultimately indeterminate and the possibilities of interpretation are endless.

In the early writings which make him famous, Derrida mainly operates as a philosopher of language, with his ethical and political allegiances at most implicit. This has not, however, stopped others from finding moral and political significance in his writings, and more recently no his own work has taken a more overtly ethical and political turn.

One influential use to which Derrida's thought has been put has been in the area of critical legal studies. The critical legal scholars tend to emphasize what they call the indeterminacy of law. (Laws have no one fixed meaning, but rather are open to endless interpretation and reinterpretation.) This doctrine, its affinities to Derrida being obvious, are used to criticize perspectives such as Robert Bork's which claim that the meaning of the U.S. constitution can be determined by looking to the original intent of the framers.

Key Derridean concepts like "différance" and "the margins of philosophy" are often given a moral and political flavor. Thus, Derrida is often invoked on behalf of a "politics of difference," a politics that recognizes and respects differences between groups. Derrida's thought is also said to speak for the marginalized. Its openness to different interpretations suggests a willingness to listen to different, previously marginalized voices.

Despite this, Derrida's thought is frequently accused of being politically reactionary. Its radical skepticism is said to be ultimately paralyzing and to offer no basis for rational critique. Derrida's defenders reject this charge arguing that deconstruction can be a strictly rational method, even if it ultimately exposes the limits of reason. And for what it is worth, Derrida's sympathies seem to remain with the political left. Thus, in recent works he has written sympathetically about Marxism.

Deconstruction is indicted as an endless process which leaves no set of values securely intact. Whether or not this is the case, Derrida himself refuses to deconstruct one key value term, the idea of "justice." For him, justice appears to be something that is taken as a given, a notion grounded in our moral intuitions. It seems to serve Derrida as a moral and political first principle which deconstruction should serve but not dislodge.

One problem with this notion of justice, however, is it is not really subject to rational proof or disproof. And like most appeals to moral intuition, this one founders on the fact that different people have very different values and senses of justice which they find intuitively appealing. Thus, Derrida's antifoundationalism means he can never find an ultimate grounding for his sense of justice, which is left therefore unfounded, a personal piety with no real basis in Derrida's philosophy.

In addition to the criticisms mentioned above, Derrida is often accused of employing a style which is unintelligible. (Foucault went so far as to label him as "terroristically obscure.") Again, his defenders find a virtue in this very difficulty; the complexity of his writings, its puns and wordplay, reveal the opaque and playful nature of language, its infinite possibilities and endless deferrals of meaning. Again, be this as it may, it does make reading Derrida difficult. Like Heidegger, he is probably best approached, at least initially, through secondary sources.

In terms of value argument, Derrida's greatest value is probably as a critic. His deconstructive readings of the major figures of the Western philosophical tradition, from Plato to Rousseau, offer one way to attack these thinkers. Derrida's work also provides a method for attacking rationalism (which he sometimes refers to as "logocentrism") as well as the logic of certain discourses such as the writings of nuclear experts. Again, Derrida's thought is highly challenging, but its contemporary influence has been so deep that it must be confronted.

LYOTARD

Jean-Francois Lyotard, another French philosopher, born in 1924, is the single figure most responsible for popularizing the term "postmodern." Lyotard also gave the term its most common definition: postmodernism involves skepticism toward grand narratives, such as Marxism and psychoanalysis, which purport to explain the world as a whole (or at least a large chunk of it). This typically postmodern skepticism also extends to science, which Lyotard regards as simply one more method of knowledge. Unfortunately, modern science has become hegemonic in its ambitions, and its exaggeration has led to the inappropriate denigration of other ways of knowing, such as narrative. (This emphasis on narrative as the source of knowledge characterizes traditional belief systems and such contemporary perspectives as feminism and critical race theory.)

Like other postmodern thinkers, Lyotard would replace the unity of a grand theory with a plurality of ideas and viewpoints. This means that in his ethics he is strongly committed to a principle of respect for others and especially respect for their diversity. One implication of this commitment is a denigration of the practical politics of democratic consensus-building. Consensus tends to be totalizing; that is, it suppresses inevitable differences in favor of a single unitary standpoint. It implies there is one truth and one way, both views that Lyotard rejects.

Lyotard's political views are highly libertarian, even anarchistic. Unlike many postmodernists, he is willing to make a strong defense of human rights. Basic human rights derive from common membership in a speech community. To deny someone his or her rights is to silence and exclude. Not surprisingly, given this theory, Lyotard sees free speech as perhaps the most fundamental of human rights -- more it seems as a means of self-expression than as a method of practical political problem solving. Within Lyotard's political theory, there is little room for legitimate state action. Virtually any act undertaken by the state is regarded as potentially totalitarian -- a form "terror" that attempts to create a totalizing uniformity. Thus, for Lyotard, politics and the state itself are inherently problematic, and justice is necessarily pluralistic, not a single objective good, but rather a multiplicity of competing concepts.

Criticisms of Lyotard include many which will sound familiar from our discussion of the other postmodern thinkers. His skepticism is regarded as irrationalist and ultimately nihilistic. His ethics are dismissed as foundationless and his politics as anarchistic. He is accused of exaggerating difference and impoverishing politics. Still, in some ways, Lyotard's thought seems less radical than that of other postmodern thinkers. His defense of human rights puts him, broadly speaking, in the liberal tradition. (Indeed, he sounds on occasion like a kind of late twentieth century John Stuart Mill.) One result of this is that Lyotard is sometimes attacked from the left as insufficiently radical, as retaining an implicit appeal to universal values (such as the rather Kantian emphasis on respecting the autonomy and difference of all Others.)

While these are damning indictments in certain segments of the academic left, they may make Lyotard more useful than some of the other postmodernists in the context of value debate. He can be employed as a strong defender of freedom (especially freedom of speech) and of human rights in general. He is clearly a forceful spokesman for the interests of the individual versus the collective good. But his skepticism toward science, justice, and democratic politics also give his thought a critical edge which can be employed against many mainstream values.

RORTY

Richard Rorty is one of America's most prominent contemporary philosophers. Born in 1931, he taught for many years at Princeton and is currently a professor at the University of Virginia. Rorty is most frequently labelled as a neopragmatist, but his thought is also often described as postmodern. Rorty indeed finds much that he admires in the postmodern thinkers, from Nietzsche to Derrida, but his differences from them are also illuminating. He has, in his recent writings, rejected the label of postmodernist. But he shares many typical postmodern preoccupations, giving them, however, his own liberal and pragmatist spin.

Rorty's epistemology has probably been the most influential aspect of his philosophy, and it here that he is the most postmodern (as well as characteristically pragmatist). Rorty is resolutely antifoundationalist. Philosophy is not "the mirror of nature"; that is, it doesn't grasp reality in its pristine form but rather as refracted through language and culture. In this position, he carries on the pragmatism of William James and John Dewey, both of whom regarded truth as "what works" rather than as a correspondence between a statement and "the facts." Rorty's skepticism toward knowledge also makes him a committed moral and cultural relativist. There are no objective moral standards, but only standards filtered through a particular process of inculturation. Rorty, however, does not regard this insight as paralyzing. He seems to regard the standards of tolerant, Western liberal egalitarianism as appropriate to people living in a culture of multiplicity and economic abundance. He defends human rights culture and seems to envision its progressive spread through the rest of the world.

Rorty's thought thus cuts in two directions. In terms of conventional political categories he is clearly a man of the left, committed to a more egalitarian domestic and international order. But he is also, despite his relativism, committed to the mainstream values of Western liberalism: freedom, equality, humanism, and democratic problem solving. So, despite their acknowledged affinities, Rorty can also be sharply critical of Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida, et al. Perhaps his criticism of Heidegger is the most systematic and trenchant. He feels that Heidegger neglects the reality of human suffering, that Heidegger's preoccupation with ontology makes him indifferent to avoidable pain.

What this means is that Rorty is probably most useful in a debate context as a critic of the other postmodern thinkers. He is a difficult critic for them to shake precisely because he shares so many postmodern assumptions but still manages to embrace mainstream liberal values.

Rorty, of course, also has his critics. One major criticism involves his epistemology, which is seen as overly skeptical, and as offering the potential for paralyzing doubt. His ethics are also indicted for their excessive relativism. Finally, his politics are seen as a perverse apology for the status quo. At the extreme, they are indicted as oppressive and ethnocentric, fatally imbued with all the flaws his critics see as inherent in mainstream Western culture.

As I have noted at several points in this discussion, postmodern thought is challenging, both in its difficulty to grasp and in the radicalness of its perspectives. But its contemporary influence is undeniable, and its critique is one which the political and philosophical mainstream has been increasingly forced to confront. It is probably only a matter of time before postmodern theories become more prominently displayed in value debate, an eventuality for which the advanced debater will certainly want to be prepared.

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MPP5-001 NIETZSCHE'S WORK IS THE TURNING POINT FROM MODERNITY TO POSTMODERNITY

Roland Bleiker, Ph.D. candidate, Australian National University Political Sciences/Faculties, *ALTERNATIVES*, January 1997, p.59.

Nietzsche's skepticism toward grounding critique in an investigation of the origins of things is important. It is one of the reasons why some consider his work as the conceptual turning point from modernity to postmodernity.

MPP5-002 REPRESENTATIVE POSTMODERNIST THINKERS

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.172.

The most academically entrenched attack upon humanism, the Enlightenment, and reason are the highly influential philosophical tendencies that go under the name of postmodernism. It is arguable whether this name adequately encompasses such disparate, even idiosyncratic views as those of Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and a constellation of former French leftists such as Jean-Francois Lyotard, Gilles Deleuze, and Jean Baudrillard, to cite the most well-known to an Anglo-American readership. Yet certain basic commonalities, I believe, justly designate their work as postmodernist or poststructuralist (the two words are often used interchangeably).

MPP5-003 TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD AREN'T FUNDAMENTALLY DISTINCT

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, *BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL* (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.46-7.

It is no more than a moral prejudice that truth is worth more than mere appearance; it is even the worst proved assumption there is in the world. Let at least this much be admitted: there would be no life at all if not on the basis of perspective estimates and appearances; and if, with the virtuous enthusiasm and clumsiness of some philosophers, one wanted to abolish the "apparent world" altogether -- well, supposing you could do that, at least nothing would be left of your "truth" either. Indeed, what forces us at all to suppose that there is an essential opposition of "true" and "false"? Is it not sufficient to assume degrees of apparentness and, as it were, lighter and darker shadows and shades of appearance -- different "values," to use the language of painters? Why couldn't the world that concerns us -- be a fiction?

MPP5-004 TRUTH CAN LEAD TO THE NEGATION OF LIFE

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, *BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL* (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.11-12.

The falseness of a judgment is for us not necessarily an objection to a judgment; in this respect our new language may sound strangest. The question is to what extent it is life-promoting, life-preserving, species-preserving, perhaps even species-cultivating. And we are fundamentally inclined to claim that the falsest judgments (which include the synthetic judgments a priori) are the most indispensable for us; that without accepting the fictions of logic, without measuring reality against the purely invented world of the unconditional and self-identical, without a constant falsification of the world by means of numbers, man could not live -- that renouncing false judgments would mean renouncing life and a denial of life.

MPP5-005 NIETZSCHE INSISTS ON THE DIVERSITY OF MORAL CODES

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.200.

Nietzsche first speaks of the "will to power" in the chapter "On the Thousand and One Goals." The chapter begins with moral relativism. Different nations have -- this is the meaning of the title -- different goals and moral codes. All of these, however, have one thing in common: they are creations of the will to power. Nietzsche's difference with those who would rationalize the valuations of their own society is apparent. Against them he urges moral relativism, and -lacking any revelation -- he cannot a priori assert the superiority of the values of his own society; nor can he judge, or even compare, the values of different societies unless they have something in common. Against the relativists, however, Nietzsche urges that there is a common element that makes possible comparative judgments of value about the moral codes of various societies. A table of virtues hangs over every people. Behold, it is the table of its overcomings; behold, it is the voice of its will to power. Praiseworthy is whatever seems difficult to a people; whatever seems indispensable and difficult is called good; and the rarest, the most difficult -- that they call holy.

MPP5-006 HUMAN DIVERSITY DENIES THE APPROPRIATENESS OF A SINGLE MORALITY

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in *THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE*, 1888, p.491.

Let us finally consider how naive it is altogether to, say: "Man ought to be such and such!" Reality shows us an enchanting wealth of types, the abundance of a lavish play and change of forms -- and some wretched loafer of a moralist comments: "No! Man ought to be different." He even knows what man should be like, this wretched bigot and prig: he paints himself on the wall and comments, "Ecce homo!" But even when the moralist addresses himself only to the single human being and says to him, "You ought to be such and such!" he does not cease to make himself ridiculous. The single human being is a piece of fatum from the front and from the rear, one law more, one necessity more for all that is yet to come and to be. To say to him, "Change yourself!" is to demand that everything be changed, even retroactively. And indeed there have been consistent moralists who wanted man to be different, that is, virtuous -- they wanted him remade in their own image, as a prig: to that end, they negated the world! No small madness! No modest kind of immodesty!

MPP5-007 MASTER AND SLAVE MORALITY ARE THE TWO BASIC TYPES

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, *BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL* (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.204.

Wandering through the many subtler and coarser moralities which have so far been prevalent on earth, or still are prevalent, I found that certain features recurred regularly together and were closely associated -- until I finally discovered two basic types and one basic difference. There are master morality and slave morality -- I add immediately that in all the higher and more mixed cultures there also appear attempts at mediation between these two moralities, and yet more often the interpenetration and mutual misunderstanding of both, and at times they occur directly alongside each other -- even in the same human being, within a single soul. The moral discrimination of values has originated either among a ruling group whose consciousness of its difference from the ruled group was accompanied by delight -- or among the ruled, the slaves and dependents of every degree.

MPP5-008 REJECTION OF CHRISTIANITY UNDERMINES CHRISTIAN MORALITY

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in *THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE*, 1888, p.515-16.

We others hold otherwise. When one gives up the Christian faith, one pulls the right to Christian morality out from under one's feet. This morality is by no means self-evident: this point has to be exhibited again and again, despite the English flatheads. Christianity is a system, a whole view of things thought out together. By breaking one main concept out of it, the faith in God, one breaks the whole: nothing necessary remains in one's hands. Christianity presupposes that man does not know, cannot know, what is good for him, what evil: he believes in God, who alone knows it. Christian morality is a command; its origin is transcendent; it is beyond all criticism, all right to criticism; it has truth only if God is the truth -- it stands and falls with faith in God.

MPP5-009 THE GREAT INDIVIDUAL IS THE ULTIMATE VALUE

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.313-14.

For Nietzsche, the overman does not have instrumental value for the maintenance of society: he is valuable in himself because he embodies the state of being that has the only ultimate value there is; and society is censured insofar as it insists on conformity and impedes his development.

MPP5-010 NIETZSCHE STRESSES INDIVIDUAL SELF-REALIZATION

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.308.

In the third Meditation he had inquired as to how the individual might be able to give meaning to his life, lest his "existence" remain "a thoughtless accident." His answer had been, in effect, that you should realize your own true self; and the question had then arisen how you can know this true self. This problem was solved by the suggestion that you might consider your "educator" and meditate upon those of his features which you have always loved most. You should then envisage "your true self [which] does not lie deeply concealed within you but immeasurably high over you [uber dir]."

MPP5-011 THE OVERMAN IS THE ONE WHO HAS FULFILLED HIMSELF

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.312.

The unphilosophic and inartistic mass remain animalic, while the man who overcomes himself, sublimating his impulses, consecrating his passions, and giving style to his character, becomes truly human or -- as Zarathustra would say, enraptured by the word uber -- superhuman. This point is further illustrated by Nietzsche's later use of the phrase "human, superhuman" (FW 382; EH-Z 2). This is, of course, a variation of the earlier "human, all-too-human" with which Nietzsche had intended to brand our animal nature. The "human, superhuman" then refers to our true self, and the "superman" is the one who has transfigured his physis and acquired self-mastery.

MPP5-012 CREATION OF GREAT INDIVIDUALS SHOULD BE THE ULTIMATE AIM

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.173.

By empirical observation, concentrating on art, philosophy, and religion, Nietzsche finds that humanity has not become "better" through history; i.e., he fails to find bigger and better artists and philosophers in his own time than, say, in the age of Plato or Leonardo. Yet it was shown in the second Meditation, why "the goal of humanity cannot lie in the end, but only in its highest specimens". In the third Meditation, this thought, too, is taken up again. The mass of men are essentially animals without any unique dignity, and "the goal of development" cannot, therefore, lie "in the mass of specimens or in their well-being" but only "in single great human beings."

MPP5-013 CREATION OF OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUALS IS THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF HUMANITY

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST, 1974, p.149.

Empirical facts do not seem to him to warrant the belief that history is a story of progress, that ever greater values are developed, and that whatever is later in the evolutionary scale is also eo ipso more valuable. "The goal of humanity cannot lie in the end [Ende] but only in its highest specimens". Perhaps there is no more basic statement of Nietzsche's philosophy in all his writings than this sentence. Here is the most crucial point of his philosophy of history and theory of values -- no less than the clue to his "aristocratic" ethics and his opposition to socialism and democracy.

MPP5-014 THE PRODUCTION OF SUPERIOR INDIVIDUALS IS THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERS

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, UNFASHIONABLE OBSERVATIONS, 1873-76, p.215.

At times it is harder to concede something than it is to understand it, and this is exactly what most people may experience when they reflect on the proposition: "Humanity should work ceaselessly toward producing great individuals -- this and only this should be its task." How gladly we would apply to society and its aims a lesson that can be derived from the observation of every single species of animal and plant life, namely, that the only thing that matters is the superior individual specimen, the more unusual, more powerful, more complex, more fruitful specimen -- how gladly, that is, if inculcated delusions about the aim of society did not put up stubborn resistance.

MPP5-015 THE LIFE THAT FAILS TO ACHIEVE ITSELF IS WORTHLESS

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, UNFASHIONABLE OBSERVATIONS, 1873-76, p.172.

Every young soul hears this cry night and day and trembles, for when it thinks of its true liberation, it has an inkling of the measure of happiness for which it is destined from eternity. As long as it is shackled by the chains of opinions and fear, nothing can help it attain this happiness. And how bleak and senseless life can become without this liberation! There is no more desolate or repulsive creature in nature than the human being who has evaded his genius and who then casts furtive glances, left and right, behind himself, and all about. In the end we can no longer even take hold of a person like this, for he is all exterior without a kernel, a tattered, painted, puffed-up garment, a decked-out ghost that can arouse no fear, and certainly no pity.

MPP5-016 FELICITY CONSISTS IN ACHIEVING ONE'S INDIVIDUALITY

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, UNFASHIONABLE OBSERVATIONS, 1873-76, p.171-2.

Artists alone despise this lethargic promenading draped in borrowed manners and appropriated opinions, and they expose the hidden secret, everyone's bad conscience, the principle that every human being is a one-of-a-kind miracle. They date to show us how every human being, down to each movement of his muscles, is himself and himself alone; moreover, they show us that in the strict consistency of his uniqueness he is beautiful and worthy of contemplation, as novel and incredible as every work of nature, and anything but boring. When the great thinker disdains human beings, it is their laziness he disdains, for it is laziness that makes them appear to be mass-produced commodities, to be indifferent, unworthy of human interchange and instruction. The human being who does not want to be a part of the masses need only cease to go easy on himself; let him follow his conscience, which cries out to him: "Be yourself! You are none of those things that you now do, think, and desire."

MPP5-017 THE GOAL OF HUMANITY IS THE PRODUCTION OF GREAT INDIVIDUALS

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, UNFASHIONABLE OBSERVATIONS, 1873-76, p.151.

This will be the day when we wisely avoid all constructions of the world process or even of the history of humanity, a time in which we will no longer pay attention to the masses, but once again only to individuals, who form a kind of bridge over the turbulent stream of becoming. Individuals do not further a process, rather they live timelessly and simultaneously, thanks to history, which permits such a combination; they live in the republic of geniuses of which Schopenhauer once spoke. One giant calls to another across the desolate expanses of time, and this lofty dialogue between spirits continues, undisturbed by the wanton, noisy chattering of the dwarfs that crawl about beneath them. The task of history is to be their mediator and thereby continually to incite and lend strength to the production of greatness. No, the goal of humankind cannot possibly be found in its end stage, but only in its highest specimens.

MPP5-018 EGOISM IS NATURAL TO NOBLE INDIVIDUALS

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.215.

At the risk of displeasing innocent ears I propose: egoism belongs to the nature of a noble soul -- I mean that unshakable faith that to a being such as "we are" other beings must be subordinate by nature and have to sacrifice themselves. The noble soul accepts this fact of its egoism without any question mark, also without any feeling that it might contain hardness, constraint, or caprice, rather as something that may be founded in the primordial law of things: if it sought a name for this fact it would say, "it is justice itself."

MPP5-019 THE EGOISM OF VALUABLE INDIVIDUALS OF GREAT WORTH

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE, 1888, p.533-4.

The natural value of egoism. Self-interest is worth as much as the person who has it: it can be worth a great deal, and it can be unworthy and contemptible. Every individual may be scrutinized to see whether he represents the ascending or the descending line of life. Having made that decision, one has a canon for the worth of his self-interest. If he represents the ascending line, then his worth is indeed extraordinary -- and for the sake of life as a whole, which takes a step farther through him, the care for his preservation and for the creation of the best conditions for him may even be extreme. The single one, the "individual," as hitherto understood by the people and the philosophers alike, is an error after all: he is nothing by himself, no atom, no "link in the chain," nothing merely inherited from former times; he is the whole single line of humanity up to himself.

MPP5-020 ALTRUISM IS A FORMULA OF DECADENCE

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE, 1888, p.535-6.

Critique of the morality of decadence. An "altruistic" morality -- a morality in which self-interest wilts away -- remains a bad sign under all circumstances. This is true of individuals; it is particularly true of nations. The best is lacking when self-interest begins to be lacking. Instinctively to choose what is harmful for oneself, to feel attracted by "disinterested" motives, that is virtually the formula of decadence. "Not to seek one's own advantage" -- that is merely the moral fig leaf for quite a different, namely, a physiological, state of affairs: "I no longer know how to find my own advantage." Disregard of the instincts! Man is finished when he becomes altruistic. Instead of saying naively, "I am no longer worth anything," the moral lie in the mouth of the decadent says, "Nothing is worth anything, life is not worth anything." Such a judgment always remains very dangerous, it is contagious: throughout the morbid soil of society it soon proliferates into a tropical vegetation of concepts -- now as a religion (Christianity), now as a philosophy (Schopenhauerism). Sometimes the poisonous vegetation which has grown out of such decomposition poisons life itself for millennia with its fumes.

MPP5-021 MORALITY SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD IN TERMS OF WHAT ENHANCES LIFE

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE, 1888, p.489-90.

I reduce a principle to a formula. Every naturalism in morality -- that is, every healthy morality -- is dominated by an instinct of life; some commandment of life is fulfilled by a determinate canon of "shalt" and "shalt not"; some inhibition and hostile element on the path of life is thus removed. Anti-natural morality -- that is, almost every morality which has so far been taught, revered, and preached -- turns, conversely, against the instincts of life: it is condemnation of these instincts, now secret, now outspoken and impudent. When it says, "God looks at the heart," it says No to both the lowest and the highest desires of life, and posits God as the enemy of life. The saint in whom God delights is the ideal eunuch. Life has come to an end where the "kingdom of God" begins.

MPP5-022 WE CAN'T ASSESS THE VALUE OF LIFE BECAUSE LIFE IS THE ONLY STANDARD OF VALUE

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE, 1888, p.490.

One would require a position outside of life, and yet have to know it as well as one, as many, as all who have lived it, in order to be permitted even to touch the problem of the value of life: reasons enough to comprehend that this problem is for us an unapproachable problem. When we speak of values, we speak with the inspiration, with the way of looking at things, which is part of life: life itself forces us to posit values; life itself values through us when we posit values.

MPP5-023 BELIEF IN MORAL INTUITIONS IS JUST A HANGOVER OF CHRISTIANITY

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE, 1888, p.516.

When the English actually believe that they know "intuitively" what is good and evil, when they therefore suppose that they no longer require Christianity as the guarantee of morality, we merely witness the effects of the dominion of the Christian value judgment and an expression of the strength and depth of this dominion: such that the origin of English morality has been forgotten, such that the very conditional character of its right to existence is no longer felt. For the English, morality is not yet a problem.

MPP5-024 NIETZSCHE DENIES THE EFFICACY OF THE POLITICAL

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.165-6.

Nietzsche's opposition to political liberalism cannot be analyzed in this context either -- but one statement that helps to explain his position can be found in the *Meditation on Schopenhauer*: "How should a political innovation be sufficient to make men once and for all into happy inhabitants of the earth?" Nietzsche opposes not only the State but any overestimation of the political. The kingdom of God is in the hearts of men and Nietzsche accuses Christianity of having betrayed this fundamental insight from the beginning, whether by transferring the kingdom into another world and thus depreciating this life, or by becoming political and seeking salvation through organizations, churches, cults, sacraments, or priests. He will not put his faith either in a church or in a political party or program, for he believes that the question of salvation is a "question for the single one."

MPP5-025 POLITICS SHOULDN'T SEEK THE COMMON GOOD

Andre Mineau, Professor of Philosophy, University of Sudbury, *HISTORY OF EUROPEAN IDEAS*, 1989, p.880.

As for the natural goal of politics, according to Nietzsche, it has nothing to do with common good. To him, common good means literally the good of the commons, and he sees no point in diverting spirit and energy from what should be the main task of great politics: the nurturing of those superior men who represent the best hopes for the overcoming of man. Nietzsche calls for the time where the morality of the weak will apply to the weak only, and where the strong will find the possibility to live aside and above, so as to be free to carry out their superior designs. He dreams of an aristocratic society, one that would recognise and promote the natural fact of hierarchy, one that would be founded on the natural differences between men, on the relevance of distances. And he takes the parry of culture against the State, the 'cold monster' devoted to serving the interests of the superfluous.

MPP5-026 NIETZSCHE REJECTED STATISM

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.123.

The only fierce attack in these three books is directed against the State, which is pictured as the very devil. This, too, is an announcement -- by drums and trumpets -- of a motif that remains characteristic of all of Nietzsche's works. He was not primarily a social or political philosopher, his "influence" and Baumbler's caricature of him as *Politiker* notwithstanding. Nietzsche and Hegel were both primarily concerned about the realm of Absolute Spirit, i.e., art, religion, and philosophy, and both evaluated the State in terms of its relation to these higher pursuits. Hegel had praised the State because he thought that it alone made possible these supra-social enterprises; Nietzsche condemned the State as their archenemy. Each considered customary morality essentially social and hence associated it with the State. Hegel affirmed it, while Nietzsche criticized it, but they agreed in their firm opposition to Kant's doctrine of the primacy of moral values.

MPP5-027 NIETZSCHE REJECTED THE STATE BECAUSE IT FRUSTRATES SELF-REALIZATION

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.163.

Nietzsche's views are misunderstood when they are considered no more than personal opinions or preferences which must be explained psychologically. His denunciation of the State should be considered in its context as a corollary of his value theory. The State is depreciated, not because of its "disadvantage for life" -- the criterion at the beginning of the *Meditation on history* -- but because it prevents man from realizing himself. The standard of valuation is no longer simply life but the improved, perfected, and transfigured life, first envisaged at the end of the second *Meditation*.

MPP5-028 THE STATE FORCES US TO BETRAY OURSELVES

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.158.

The reason why most men fail to heed the voice of their true self is twofold. Nietzsche hesitates to decide which is the most universal human characteristic: fear or laziness. Both keep man from heeding the call to achieve culture and thus to realize himself. Men are afraid of social retaliation and do not dare be their own unique selves. It is for this reason that the State becomes the devil of Nietzsche's ethics: it intimidates man into conformity and thus tempts and coerces him to betray his proper destiny.

MPP5-029 NIETZSCHE SAW THE STATE AS A DESTRUCTIVE IDOL

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.166.

Even in his *Meditation on Schopenhauer*, to be sure, Nietzsche recognizes that there is more to the State than its oppressive and intimidating power which makes men conform and thus betray their unique destiny of self-realization. The modern situation, and the Nation State in particular, has another side as well, but according to Nietzsche: the second side is not a bit more delightful but only more disturbing. There are certainly . . . tremendous forces, but they are savage, primordial, and utterly merciless. One looks upon them with uneasy expectations as upon the seething cauldron of a witch's kitchen: any moment it may flash and lighten to announce terrible apparitions . . . the so-called Nation State . . . is . . . only an increment of the general insecurity and menace . . . and the hunt for happiness will never be greater than when it must be caught between today and tomorrow: because the day after tomorrow all hunting time may have come to an end altogether. We live in the period of atoms, of atomistic chaos. . . . Now almost everything on earth is determined by the crudest and most evil forces, by the egotism of the purchasers and the military despots. The State, in the hands of the latter . . . wishes that people would lavish on it the same idolatrous cult that they used to lavish on the Church [4].

MPP5-030 NIETZSCHE SAW THE STATE AS ULTIMATELY DESTRUCTIVE

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST, 1974, p.167.

Nietzsche is impressed with the urgency of this task. The ancient theological picture of man is gone. If we cannot discover a new picture of man that will again give him a sense of his essential dignity, the State, in the hands of military despots, will demand that we should yield to it in idolatry; and eventually men will lose all respect for one another, all social structures will break down, and men will seek only to rob and to exploit one another.

MPP5-031 REGARDING THE STATE AS THE HIGHEST GOAL IS STUPID

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, UNFASHIONABLE OBSERVATIONS, 1873-76, p.197.

Here, however, we are experiencing the consequences of that dogma that has of late been preached from all the rooftops, a dogma that asserts that the state is the highest aim of humanity and that a man can have no higher duty than service to the state. In this dogma I see a relapse not so much into paganism as into stupidity. It may be the case that a man who sees in service to the state his highest duty in fact knows no higher duty; but there are, nonetheless, other men and other duties-and one of these duties, one that I, at least, consider to be higher than service to the state, calls upon us to eradicate stupidity in all its manifestations, this one included.

MPP5-032 DEMOCRACY EXPRESSES A HERD MORALITY

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.115-6.

Morality in Europe today is herd animal morality -- in other words, as we understand it, merely one type of human morality beside which, before which, and after which many other types, above all higher moralities, are, or ought to be, possible. But this morality resists such a "possibility," such an "ought" with all its power: it says stubbornly and inexorably, "I am morality itself, and nothing besides is morality." Indeed, with the help of a religion which indulged and flattered the most sublime herd-animal desires, we have reached the point where we find even in political and social institutions an ever more visible expression of this morality: the democratic movement is the heir of the Christian movement.

MPP5-033 DEMOCRACY MEDIOCRATIZES

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.117.

We have a different faith; to us the democratic movement is not only a form of the decay of political organization but a form of the decay, namely the diminution, of man, making him mediocre and lowering his value.

MPP5-034 DEMOCRACY IS A SYMPTOM OF DECLINE

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE, 1888, p.543.

Our institutions are no good any more: on that there is universal agreement. However, it is not their fault but ours. Once we have lost all the instincts out of which institutions grow, we lose institutions altogether because we are no longer good for them. Democracy has ever been the form of decline in organizing power: in Human, All-Too-Human (I, 472) I already characterized modern democracy, together with its hybrids such as the "German Reich," as the form of decline of the state. In order that there may be institutions, there must be a kind of will, instinct, or imperative, which is anti-liberal to the point of malice: the will to tradition, to authority, to responsibility for centuries to come, to the solidarity of chains of generations, forward and backward ad infinitum.

MPP5-035 EGALITARIANISM LEADS TO SOCIAL DISINTEGRATION

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.203.

Refraining mutually from injury, violence, and exploitation and placing one's will on a par with that of someone else -this may become, in a certain rough sense, good manners among individuals if the appropriate conditions are present (namely, if these men are actually similar in strength and value standards and belong together in one body). But as soon as this principle is extended, and possibly even accepted as the fundamental principle of society, it immediately proves to be what it really is -- a will to the denial of life, a principle of disintegration and decay.

MPP5-036 PURSUIT OF EQUALITY LEADS TO HUMAN DEGENERATION

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.118.

The over-all degeneration of man down to what today appears to the socialist dolts and flatheads as their "man of the future" -- as their ideal -- this degeneration and diminution of man into the perfect herd animal (or, as they say, to the man of the "free society"), this animalization of man into the dwarf animal of equal rights and claims, is possible, there is no doubt of it. Anyone who has once thought through this possibility to the end, no longer knows any other nausea than other men -- but perhaps also a new task!

MPP5-037 THE APPEAL TO EQUALITY IS BASED ON RESENTMENT

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in *THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE*, 1888, p.534-5.

When the anarchist, as the mouthpiece of the declining strata of society, demands with a fine indignation what is "right," "justice," and "equal rights," he is merely under the pressure of his own uncultured state, which cannot comprehend the real reason for his suffering -- what it is that he is poor in: life. A causal instinct asserts itself in him: it must be somebody's fault that he is in a bad way. Also, the "fine indignation" itself soothes him; it is a pleasure for all wretched devils to scold: it gives a slight but intoxicating sense of power. Even plaintiveness and complaining can give life a charm for the sake of which one endures it: there is a fine dose of revenge in every complaint; one charges one's own bad situation, and under certain circumstances even one's own badness, to those who are different, as if that were an injustice, a forbidden privilege. "If I am canaille, you ought to be too" -- on such logic are revolutions made.

MPP5-038 EXPLOITATION OF OTHERS IS ESSENTIAL FOR LIFE

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, *BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL* (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.203.

Even the body within which individuals treat each other as equals, as suggested before -- and this happens in every healthy aristocracy -- if it is a living and not a dying body, has to do to other bodies what the individuals within it refrain from doing to each other: it will have to be an incarnate will to power, it will strive to grow, spread, seize, become predominant -- not from any morality or immorality but because it is living and because life simply is will to power. But there is no point on which the ordinary consciousness of Europeans resists instruction as on this: everywhere people are now raving, even under scientific disguises, about coming conditions of society in which "the exploitative aspect" will be removed -- which sounds to me as if they promised to invent a way of life that would dispense with all organic functions. "Exploitation" does not belong to a corrupt or imperfect and primitive society: it belongs to the essence of what lives, as a basic organic function; it is a consequence of the will to power, which is after all the will of life.

MPP5-039 MODERN FREEDOM IS A SYMPTOM OF DECADENCE

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in *THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE*, 1888, p.545-6.

"Freedom which I do not mean." In times like these, abandonment to one's instincts is one calamity more. Our instincts contradict, disturb, destroy each other; I have already defined what is modern as physiological self-contradiction. Rationality in education would require that under iron pressure at least one of these instinct systems be paralyzed to permit another to gain in power, to become strong, to become master. Today the individual still has to be made possible by being pruned: possible here means whole. The reverse is what happens: the claim for independence, for free development, for *laissez aller* is pressed most hotly by the very people for whom no reins would be too strict. This is true in politics, this is true in art. But that is a symptom of decadence: our modern conception of "freedom" is one more proof of the degeneration of the instincts.

MPP5-040 NIETZSCHE WOULD REJECT HUMAN RIGHTS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ON HUMAN RIGHTS*, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.115.

Anti-Platonists like Nietzsche reply that attempts to get people to stop murdering, raping, and castrating each other are, in the long run, doomed to fail -- for the real truth about human nature is that we are a uniquely nasty and dangerous kind of animal. When contemporary admirers of Plato claim that all featherless bipeds even the stupid and childlike, even the women, even the sodomized -- have the same inalienable rights, admirers of Nietzsche reply that the very idea of "inalienable human rights" is, like the idea of a special added ingredient, a laughably feeble attempt by the weaker members of the species to fend off the stronger.

MPP5-041 NIETZSCHEAN VALUES PROVIDE THE GROUNDS FOR REPUDIATING HUMAN RIGHTS

Andre Mineau; Professor of Philosophy, University of Sudbury. *HISTORY OF EUROPEAN IDEAS*, 1989, p.881.

These resemblances, however, should not obscure the basic fact that there is a profound divergence between the philosophical intent behind human rights and Nietzsche's dionysism. His main political problem, beyond his anti-nationalistic and pro-European stance, is the creation and the promotion of those who announce the *Übermensch*. What matters to Nietzsche is not universal humanity present in all human beings, but a very specific subset of mankind, and only for the reason that it carries the promise of overcoming humanity.

MPP5-042 SIMPLE HUMANITY DOESN'T CONFER VALUE

Andre Mineau, Professor of Philosophy, University of Sudbury, HISTORY OF EUROPEAN IDEAS, 1989, p.880.

Within such a perspective, human rights appear, finally, as Last Man's rights. Nietzsche does not accept the human rights founding principle that men are values in themselves simply because they are human. It is natural differences between them which are relevant here, and his hope for the revival of the spirit of Archaic Greece entails, in a certain sense, a desire to return to ancient law based on statuses, and expressing differences that were considered more significant than men's common humanity.

MPP5-043 FOR NIETZSCHE, HUMAN RIGHTS REST ON DISCREDITED THEOLOGICAL IDEAS

Andre Mineau, Professor of Philosophy, University of Sudbury, HISTORY OF EUROPEAN IDEAS, 1989, p.879-80.

To summarize, the traditional perspective on human rights rests upon two complementary assumptions. Firstly, Man's humanity is endowed with intrinsic value conferring dignity upon him. Secondly, the natural goal of politics is common good, which is to be viewed as the good of human beings qua human beings, embodying, thus, those ethical demands through which men have access to genuinely human existence. But as we know, Nietzsche challenges both assumptions. Human rights, to him, constitute an ideal point of reference intended to serve as a yardstick in the making of judgments against existence, against real life. The point of reference appears now for what it is: a mere construct of the human mind, and not even a noble one, that crumbles with the Platonic World of Ideas, a by-product of European morality that cannot survive after God's death. To Nietzsche, man is no end in himself, and there is nothing left to serve as a theoretical guarantee for the opposite claim. 'Der Mensch ist etwas, das überwunden werden soll', and man is something valuable only inasmuch as he strives for the coming of *Ubersch. Mensch*. since this is a task for the few, for the privileged, value is confined to those ones who have the capacity to confer it upon themselves.

MPP5-044 NIETZSCHE REJECTED THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Andre Mineau, Professor of Philosophy, University of Sudbury, HISTORY OF EUROPEAN IDEAS, 1989, p.880.

Nietzsche's critique of the World of Ideas, beyond true and false, confronts us with the axiomatic character of the human rights principle, the term 'axiomatic', being taken here in its full epistemological sense. In other words, there can be no human rights philosophy without the principle, but the latter is by no mean, necessary since there is no absolute to which it might correspond. Religious belief and love for mankind, which offer foundation for the principle, have lost their character of necessity. They depend ultimately on epistemic decisions that may as well embrace the opposite perspective, on ethical preferences that may vary on choices that may not be made.

MPP5-045 JUSTICE IS ESSENTIALLY OPPOSED TO LIFE
Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, UNFASHIONABLE OBSERVATIONS, 1873-76, p.106-7.

But every past is worthy of being condemned -- for this is simply how it is with human affairs: human violence and weakness have always played a powerful role in them. It is not justice that sits in judgment here; even less so is it mercy that passes judgment: rather, it is life and life alone, that dark, driving, insatiable power that lusts after itself. Its verdict is always merciless, always unjust, because it has never flowed from the pure fountain of knowledge; but in most instances the verdict would be the same, even if spoken by justice itself. "For everything that comes into being is worthy of perishing. Thus it would be better if nothing came into being." It takes great strength to be able to live and forget the extent to which living and being unjust are one and the same thing.

MPP5-046 "PROGRESS" HAS INVOLVED A GENERAL DECREASE IN VITALITY

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE, 1888, p.539.

The decrease in instincts which are hostile and arouse mistrust -- and that is all our "progress" amounts to -- represents but one of the consequences attending the general decrease in vitality: it requires a hundred times more trouble and caution to make so conditional and late an existence prevail. Hence each helps the other; hence everyone is to a certain extent sick, and everyone is a nurse for the sick. And that is called "virtue." Among men who still knew life differently -- fuller, more squandering, more overflowing -- it would have been called by another name: "cowardice" perhaps, "wretchedness," "old ladies' morality."

MPP5-047 CONSERVATIVE RECOVERY OF FORMER VIRTUES IS IMPOSSIBLE

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE, 1888, p.546-7.

Whispered to the conservatives. What was not known formerly, what is known, or might be known, today: a reversion, a return in any sense or degree is simply not possible. We physiologists know that. Yet all priests and moralists have believed the opposite they wanted to take mankind back, to screw it back, to a former measure of virtue. Morality was always a bed of Procrustes. Even the politicians have aped the preachers of virtue at this point: today too there are still parties whose dream it is that all things might walk backwards like crabs. But no one is free to be a crab. Nothing avails: one must go forward -- step by step further into decadence (that is my definition of modern "progress") one can check this development and thus dam up degeneration, gather it and make it more vehement and sudden: one can do no more.

MPP5-048 FEMINISM IS A REGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, *BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL* (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.168.

Wherever the industrial spirit has triumphed over the military and aristocratic spirit, woman now aspires to the economic and legal self-reliance of a clerk: "woman as clerk" is inscribed on the gate to the modern society that is taking shape now. As she thus takes possession of new rights, aspires to become "master" and writes the "progress" of woman upon her standards and banners, the opposite development is taking place with terrible clarity: woman is retrogressing. Since the French Revolution, woman's influence in Europe has decreased proportionately as her rights and claims have increased; and the "emancipation of woman," insofar as that is demanded and promoted by women themselves (and not merely by shallow males) is thus seen to be an odd symptom of the increasing weakening and dulling of the most feminine instincts. There is stupidity in this movement, an almost masculine stupidity of which a woman who had turned out well -- and such women are always prudent -- would have to be thoroughly ashamed.

MPP5-049 ROUSSEAU ENCOURAGED STATISM

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.169.

To be more specific, Nietzsche offered three criticisms of Rousseau. First, he recognized in the citizen of Geneva one of the main forces contributing to the origin of the modern Nation State. Since it was Nietzsche's profound concern to counteract the influence of the modern Nation State, he was opposed to Rousseau; for the Nation State seemed to Nietzsche the archenemy of nonconformity, self-realization, and the "single one's" remaking of his own nature.

MPP5-050 ROUSSEAU ENCOURAGED THE REVOLUTIONARY MOB

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.169.

Finally, and this is only a development of the previous point, Nietzsche did not believe that by "returning to nature" man would become good, or that Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity were close to the state of nature. His view of "nature" was much the opposite: by returning to nature man would only become a beast of prey or a Catilinarian criminal -- and a people following Rousseau might find themselves transformed into a revolutionary mob thirsting for blood.

MPP5-051 MEN AREN'T BORN FREE AND EQUAL

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.170.

Men, as Nietzsche saw them, were not naturally equal, did not naturally love one another, and were not naturally free. Nietzsche agreed with Hegel that freedom is essentially a product of culture -- though he thought, unlike Hegel, that true "culture" could be achieved only through an open break with the State. Primitive man, far from enjoying freedom, lived in constant fear of savage animals, of his barbarian enemies, of his gods, and even of his own dreams (M 5). Thus Nietzsche, instead of wanting man to "return" to nature, thought that we must "cultivate" and "improve," "transfigure" and remake our nature.

MPP5-052 ROUSSEAU'S EQUALITY IS UNJUST

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, "Twilight of the Idols," in *THE PORTABLE NIETZSCHE*, 1888, p.553.

The bloody farce which became an aspect of the Revolution, its "immorality," are of little concern to me: what I hate is its Rousseauian morality -- the so-called "truths" of the Revolution through which it still works and attracts everything shallow and mediocre. The doctrine of equality! There is no more poisonous poison anywhere: for it seems to be preached by justice itself, whereas it really is the termination of justice. "Equal to the equal, unequal to the unequal" -- that would be the true slogan of justice; and also its corollary: "Never make equal what is unequal." That this doctrine of equality was surrounded by such gruesome and bloody events, that has given this "modern idea" par excellence a kind of glory and fiery aura so that the Revolution as a spectacle has seduced even the noblest spirits. In the end, that is no reason for respecting it any more. I see only one man who experienced it as it must be experienced, with nausea -- Goethe.

MPP5-053 NIETZSCHE SAW KANT'S MORAL PHILOSOPHY AS GROUNDLESS

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.103.

Kant's moral philosophy appeared to him a prime instance of the finding of bad reasons for what one believes on instinct -- or, in Nietzsche's words: "Kant wanted to prove in a way that would dumfound the 'common man' that the 'common man' was right" (FW 193). To put it more technically: Kant, as is well known, seems never to have questioned the existence of a moral law as a synthetic judgment a priori -- i.e., as a proposition which is neither tautological nor dependent on empirical observation, and yet knowable by, and binding on, all rational beings. On the basis of this moral law, Kant sought to establish the freedom of the will, the immortality of the soul, and the existence of God and a moral world-order -- all the while assuming the possibility of synthetic judgments a priori as an unquestioned premise. His problem was only how such judgments were possible. Thus he skipped the very question with which Nietzsche's thinking about moral values started -- and this is the clue to Nietzsche's incessant polemics against Kant.

MPP5-054 KANT FAILS TO QUESTION TO MORAL LAW
Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton,
NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST,
ANTICHRIST, 1974, p.103.

Nietzsche was not blind to Kant's merits: in his first book he spoke of the "tremendous courage and wisdom of Kant and Schopenhauer" (GT 18); and later he sided with Kant against Schopenhauer on other questions (M 132) and admitted Kant's decisive contribution to philosophy (FW 357). His own philosophy even shows many decided affinities to Kant's; but Kant's failure to question the existence of a universal moral law provoked Nietzsche's attacks which further illustrate his reasons for opposing systems and his "existential" identification of any failure to question with a desire not to experience fully."

MPP5-055 FOCUS ON MORAL INTENTIONS IS A PREJUDICE

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.44-5.

But today -- shouldn't we have reached the necessity of once more resolving on a reversal and fundamental shift in values, owing to another self-examination of man, another growth in profundity? Don't we stand at the threshold of a period which should be designated negatively, to begin with, as extra-moral? After all, today at least we immoralists have the suspicion that the decisive value of an action lies precisely in what is unintentional in it, while everything about it that is intentional, everything about it that can be seen, known, "conscious," still belongs to its surface and skin -- which, like every skin, betrays something but conceals even more. In short, we believe that the intention is merely a sign and symptom that still requires interpretation -- moreover, a sign that means too much and therefore, taken by itself alone, almost nothing. We believe that morality in the traditional sense, the morality of intentions, was a prejudice, precipitate and perhaps provisional -- something on the order of astrology and alchemy -- but in any case something that must be overcome. The overcoming of morality, in a certain sense even the self-overcoming of morality -- let this be the name for that long secret work which has been saved up for the finest and most honest, also the most malicious, consciences of today, as living touchstones of the soul.

MPP5-056 UTILITARIANISM IS A SLAVE MORALITY

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.207.

It is different with the second type of morality, slave morality. Suppose the violated, oppressed, suffering, unfree, who are uncertain of themselves and weary, moralize: what will their moral valuations have in common? Probably, a pessimistic suspicion about the whole condition of man will find expression, perhaps a condemnation of man along with his condition. The slave's eye is not favorable to the virtues of the powerful: he is skeptical and suspicious, subtly suspicious, of all the "good" that is honored there -- he would like to persuade himself that even their happiness is not genuine. Conversely, those qualities are brought out and flooded with light which serve to ease existence for those who suffer: here pity, the complaisant and obliging hand, the warm heart, patience, industry, humility, and friendliness are honored -- for here these are the most useful qualities and almost the only means for enduring the pressure of existence. Slave morality is essentially a morality of utility.

MPP5-057 UTILITARIANISM UNDERMINES NECESSARY DISTINCTIONS

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.157.

None of these ponderous herd animals with their unquiet consciences (who undertake to advocate the cause of egoism as the cause of the general welfare) wants to know or even sense that "the general welfare" is no ideal, no goal, no remotely intelligible concept, but only an emetic -- that what is fair for one cannot by any means for that reason alone also be fair for others; that the demand of one morality for all is detrimental for the higher men; in short, that there is an order of rank between man and man, hence also between morality and morality. They are a modest and thoroughly mediocre type of man, these utilitarian Englishmen, and, as said above, insofar as they are boring one cannot think highly enough of their utility.

MPP5-058 UTILITARIAN HAPPINESS IS CONTEMPTIBLE
Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.153.

Whether it is hedonism or pessimism, utilitarianism or eudaemonism -- all these ways of thinking that measure the value of things in accordance with pleasure and pain, which are mere epiphenomena and wholly secondary, are ways of thinking that stay in the foreground and naivetes on which everyone conscious of creative powers and an artistic conscience will look down not without derision, nor without pity. Pity with you -- that, of course, is not pity in your sense: it is not pity with social "distress," with "society" and its sick and unfortunate members, with those addicted to vice and maimed from the start, though the ground around us is littered with them; it is even less pity with grumbling, sorely pressed, rebellious slave strata who long for dominion, calling it "freedom." Our pity is a higher and more farsighted pity: we see how man makes himself smaller, how you make him smaller -- and there are moments when we behold your very pity with indescribable anxiety, when we resist this pity -- when we find your seriousness more dangerous than any frivolity. You want, if possible -- and there is no more insane "if possible" -- to abolish suffering. And we? It really seems that we would rather have it higher and worse than ever. Well-being as you understand it -- that is no goal, that seems to us an end, a state that soon makes man ridiculous and contemptible -- that makes his destruction desirable.

MPP5-059 LIVING FOR THE GENERAL GOOD IS A WASTE OF GREAT INDIVIDUALS

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, UNFASHIONABLE OBSERVATIONS, 1873-76, p.215-16.

It seems absurd that one human being should exist for the sake of another human being; "No, rather for the sake of all others, or at least for as many as possible!" But come now, my dear Mr. Commonman, as if it were less absurd to have numbers decide where it is a matter of value and significance! For surely the question is: How can your life, the life of the individual, obtain the highest value, the deepest significance? How is it least wasted? Surely only by living for the benefit of the rarest and most valuable specimens, not for the benefit of the majority, that is, for the benefit of those who, taken as individuals, are the least valuable specimens.

MPP5-060 EVEN SCIENCE IS ONLY AN INTERPRETATION

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL (Walter Kaufmann translation), 1886, p.21-2.

It is perhaps just dawning on five or six minds that physics, too, is only an interpretation and exegesis of the world (to suit us, if I may say so!) and not a world-explanation; but insofar as it is based on belief in the senses, it is regarded as more, and for a long time to come must be regarded as more -- namely, as an explanation.

MPP5-061 FOR NIETZSCHE, LANGUAGE CONDITIONS THOUGHT

Roland Bleiker, Ph.D. candidate, Australian National University Political Sciences/Faculties, ALTERNATIVES, January 1997, p.66.

Languages, in Nietzsche's view, are built upon a set of prejudices that are expressed via metaphors; selectively filtered images of objects and impressions that surround us. Languages are more than just mediums of communication: they represent the relationship between people and their environment -- they are part of a larger discursive struggle over meaning and interpretation, an integral element of politics. Yet, the process of neglecting that we are all conditioned by decades of linguistically entrenched values largely camouflages the system of exclusion that is operative in all speech forms. We become accustomed to our distorting metaphors until we "lie herd-like in a style obligatory for all."

MPP5-062 CRITIQUE IS INEFFECTIVE

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, UNFASHIONABLE OBSERVATIONS, 1873-76, p.121.

Even if something that is most astonishing should occur -- the mob of the historically neutral is always on the spot, ready to survey and supervise the author from afar. Immediately the echo resounds: but always as "critique," while just a short time earlier the critics had not even dreamed of the possibility of the event. At no point does the work give rise to an effect, but always only to a "critique," and the critique likewise produces no effect, but instead is only subjected to a further critique. They have struck an agreement, moreover, that many critiques are to be regarded as an effect, few critiques as a failure. But basically, despite this kind of "effect," everything remains as it was: to be sure, for some time people jabber in a novel way, and then later in some other novel way, but meanwhile they keep on doing what they have always done. The historical cultivation of our critics does not even permit them to produce an effect in the true sense of that word, namely, an effect on life and action: even the blackest writing is absorbed by their blotting paper; even on the most graceful drawing they smear their fat brushstrokes that are supposed to be seen as corrections. Then that's the end of it. But their critical pens never cease to flow, for they have lost control of them, and instead of guiding their pens they are guided by them. It is precisely in this immoderation of their critical outpourings, in this lack of self-mastery, in what the Romans called impotentia, that the weakness of the modern personality is disclosed.

MPP5-063 THE CRITIQUE OF LANGUAGE IS IRRELEVANT TO LIFE

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, UNFASHIONABLE OBSERVATIONS, 1873-76, p.246-7.

The only possible criticism of any philosophy, and the only one that proves anything, is trying to see if one can live by this philosophy, and this has never been taught at any university. The only thing taught there is the critique of words about words. And now just imagine a youthful mind, without much experience in life, in which fifty systems expressed in words and fifty critiques of these systems are crammed next to each other and confused -- what a wasteland, what a jungle, what a mockery of an education in philosophy.

MPP5-064 GENUINE PHILOSOPHY MUST BE CREATIVE AS WELL AS CRITICAL

Alan Megill, University of Iowa, *PROPHETS OF EXTREMITY*, 1985, p.96.

Nietzsche sees himself, clearly, as a critic of the regnant values of bourgeois Christian civilization. But the genuine philosopher must be a creator of values as well as a critic. In Nietzsche's words, "genuine philosophers . . . are commanders and legislators: they say, 'thus it shall be!'...With a creative hand they reach for the future, and all that has been becomes a means for them, an instrument, a hammer. Their 'knowing' is creating, their creating is a legislation, their will to truth is -- will to power."

MPP5-065 NIETZSCHE WASN'T A GERMAN NATIONALIST OR ANTI-SEMITIC

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.177.

That Nietzsche was neither a German nationalist nor an anti-Semite, as so many supposed, no longer requires elucidation today. He was indeed individualist, and a biting critic of mass culture and the 'slave mentality' inculcated in the 'herd' by Christianity.

MPP5-066 NIETZSCHE WASN'T A GERMAN NATIONALIST

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.163.

Baumler's many arguments are for the most part too absurd to merit serious refutation. Granting, for example, that Nietzsche did repudiate the State consistently, Baumler adds that, after all, "the State . . . is an invention of the Orient"; and he quite generally uses "Teutonic" and "how primordially Teutonic!" as arguments. Against this approach one can cite Nietzsche himself, who denounced this very attitude: One must first be "German" and have "race," then one can decide about all values and disvalues in historicism . . . "German" has become an argument, Deutschland, Deutschland uber alles, a principle; the Teutons represent the "moral world-order." . . . There is now a historiography that is reichsdeutsch; there is even, I fear, an anti-Semitic one . . . and Herr von Treitschke is not ashamed . . . [EH-W 2].

MPP5-067 NIETZSCHE WASN'T ANTI-SEMITIC

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.226.

The long exposition of the same ideas in the notes of *The Will to Power* culminates in the dictum: "the Aryan influence has corrupted all the world" (WM 142). This conclusion may suggest that Nietzsche was something of a racist after all, though the very antipode of the later Nazi movement. As will be seen later on, however, this interpretation would be false; Nietzsche did not interpret history racially; and the violent dicta about "Aryan humanity" and "Aryan influence" must be understood as ad hominem arguments against contemporary racists. Nietzsche attacks them by saying that, if one were to accept such categories as Semitic and Aryan, the so-called Aryans would appear in the worst light.

MPP5-068 NIETZSCHE REJECTED RACISM

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.303.

One may conclude this argument by citing four short epigrams that are representative of the notes of this period: Value of anti-Semitism: to drive the Jews to set themselves higher goals.... Contra Aryan and Semitic. Where races are mixed, there is the source of great cultures. How much mendacity [Verlogenheit] and morass is involved in raising racial questions in the medley Europe of today! Maxim: to have intercourse with nobody who has any share in the mendacious race swindle [xvi, 373 f.]. These epigrams summarize much of Nietzsche's thought about these problems. Until the very end he considered racism a maze of lies, and believed that race mixture was the source of great cultures and that social penalization might well result in a redoubled spiritual effort. Now as ever, he insisted that the Jews had through their history accumulated characteristics that made it desirable that they should become an ingredient of a future mixed race (xvi, 374) and that anti-Semitism was "the lowest level of European culture, its morass" (xvi, 391). Though he sometimes employs racial terminology, the main current of his thought is definitely "contra Aryan and Semitic" and concerned with culture, not with race -- and culture was to Nietzsche not a function of race, nor of anything merely physical, but something that involves the whole man, body and spirit; and even insofar as it draws upon heredity, it must take into account the spirit no less than the body.

MPP5-069 NIETZSCHE DIDN'T ADVOCATE TYRANNY

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.316.

Tyranny over others is not part of Nietzsche's vision, though the failure to indulge in it is no virtue unless one has the power to become a tyrant and refrains deliberately. The ideal is "the Roman Caesar with Christ's soul" (WM 983). The *Obermensch* -- even if one considers Nietzsche's reverence for Napoleon and Caesar, rather than his admiration for Socrates and Goethe -- does not introduce a new conception into the account here given of Nietzsche's philosophy: he is the "Dionysian" man who is depicted under the name of Goethe at the end of the *Gotzen-Dammerung* (IX, 49). He has overcome his animal nature, organized the chaos of his passions, sublimated his impulses, and given style to his character -- or, as Nietzsche said of Goethe: "he disciplined himself to wholeness, he created himself" and became "the man of tolerance, not from weakness but from strength," "a spirit who has become free."

MPP5-070 NIETZSCHE DIDN'T GLORIFY THE "BLOND BEAST"

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.225.

If Nietzsche's few references to the "blond beast" -- blonde Bestie -- are to be understood similarly. The Borgia and the beast are both ideograms for the conception of unsublimated animal passion. Nietzsche does not glorify either of them. He derides emasculation and scorns the Church for having "hunted down" the Teutonic barbarians -- "blond beasts" -- only to put them behind bars in monasteries (G VII 2). This alleged historical process, however, is viewed supra-historically as an allegory or symbol of the extirpation of the impulses. The "blond beast" is not a racial concept and does not refer to the "Nordic race" of which the Nazis later made so much. Nietzsche specifically refers to Arabs and Japanese, Romans and Greeks, no less than ancient Teutonic tribes when he first introduces this term (GM I-II)-and the "blondness" obviously refers to the beast, the lion, rather than the kind of man.

MPP5-071 THE NAZIS USED NIETZSCHE BY TAKING HIM OUT OF CONTEXT

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.300-1.

There is no point in indulging in endless redundancies by citing more examples. Suffice it to say that the notes -which Baumbler so decidedly prefers to the books -- are entirely at one with the finished works. Here, too, Nietzsche could be quoted in support of Nazism only when passages were torn from their context. Thus Oehler quotes correctly from the notes of Nietzsche's last years: "No new Jews any more! And keep the doors toward the East closed!" But Oehler fails to mention that Nietzsche himself put these words within quotation marks and proceeded: -thus a wise consideration might counsel the German Jews themselves" because it is "their task to grow into the German character," and continued immigration would impede the process of intermarriage and assimilation (XVI, 371).

MPP5-072 NIETZSCHE WASN'T A NIHILIST

Michael Tanner, Lecturer in Philosophy, Cambridge, *NIETZSCHE*, 1994, p.32.

The first thing to hold in mind is that Nietzsche does not deny the existence (in some sense) of values. It is a common and amazing mistake to think that he does. But the denial of value is what he primarily means by 'nihilism', the advent of which he dreads above all else. If he sometimes thinks of himself as the prophet of nihilism, it is not in the sense that he is proclaiming its arrival, as something to be celebrated, but in the sense that Jeremiah was the prophet of the destruction of Jerusalem. What he portrays, in book after book, is the gradual but accelerating decline of Western man into a state where no values any longer impress him, or where he mouths them but they mean nothing to him any longer. That is what he sees as imminent. How has this catastrophe, which none of his contemporaries seemed to recognize, come about, and how can it be remedied?

MPP5-073 NIETZSCHE'S PHILOSOPHY AIMS TO OVERCOME NIHILISM

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.109-10.

Traditional morality seems to Nietzsche ineluctably moribund -- a dying tree that cannot be saved by grafting new fruit on it. We may recall his conception of the philosopher as a doctor -- a surgeon. The health of our civilization appeared to him to be severely threatened: it looked impressively good, but seemed to Nietzsche thoroughly undermined -- a diagnosis which, though trite today, was perhaps no mean feat in the eighteen-eighties. Under the circumstances, one could humor the patient and let him die, or put hypocrisy and flattery aside, speak up in behalf of one's diagnosis, and "apply the knife." In other words, Nietzsche believed that, to overcome nihilism, we must first of all recognize it.

MPP5-074 NIETZSCHE DOESN'T REJECT ATTENTION TO OTHERS' NEEDS

Michael Tanner, Lecturer in Philosophy, Cambridge, *NIETZSCHE*, 1994, p.43.

It is clear that Nietzsche is not talking about giving a starving person food and drink, or administering anaesthetics to someone about to undergo an operation. His attack is concerned with pity as a full-time occupation of sorting out people's lives, with a noble neglect, as we are taught, of one's own interests. So it is merely vulgar (and very common indeed) to misinterpret him as advocating neglect of others' basic requirements, as his immediately following discussion of the effects of pity on the pitier makes plain. 'I know, there are a hundred decent and praiseworthy ways of losing my own way, and they are truly highly "moral"! Indeed, those who now preach the morality of pity even take the view that this and only this is moral -- to lose one's own way in order to come to the assistance of a neighbour' (GS 338). And he continues eloquently to stress how hard, often how lonely and remote from gratitude and warmth the pursuit of one's own way is. He concludes, tellingly, with 'my morality which says to me: Live in seclusion so that you can live for yourself.'

MPP5-075 NIETZSCHE WASN'T AN IRRATIONALIST

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, *NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST*, 1974, p.230.

While Nietzsche thus comes to the conclusion that reason is man's highest faculty, his view is not based on any other principle than the power standard. Reason is extolled not because it is the faculty that abstracts from the given, forms universal concepts, and draws inferences, but because these skills enable it to develop foresight and to give consideration to all the impulses, to organize their chaos, to integrate them into a harmony -- and thus to give man power: power over himself and over nature. In human affairs, too, Nietzsche points out, reason gives men greater power than sheer bodily strength. Foresight and patience, and above all "great self-mastery" (which, under unfavorable circumstances, also makes possible dissimulation) -- that is, according to Nietzsche, of the very essence of Geist (G IX 14).

MPP5-076 NIETZSCHE REJECTED IRRATIONALISM

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST, 1974, p.231.

Rationality "distinguishes the higher from the lower men." Nor is this a casual point in Nietzsche's writings. The identification of the hatred of reason with the bad intellectual conscience can be found everywhere in his books and notes; irrationality is ever a weakness in his eyes; and rationality, a sign of power. His entire attack on "systems" is based on his objection to the irrationality which he finds in the failure to question premises.

MPP5-077 NIETZSCHE WAS IRONICALLY PRO-FEMINIST

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.202.

What Nietzsche says -- and repeats with hysterical insistence -- is that woman is the source of all folly and unreason, the siren figure who lures the male philosopher out of his appointed truth-seeking path. 'Progress of the idea,' Nietzsche writes: 'it becomes more subtle, insidious, incomprehensible -- it becomes female' (Spurs, p. 89). But there is a kind of self-implicating irony here which Derrida is quick to point out. For Nietzsche is himself engaged in precisely that 'insidious' destruction of philosophy -- the undoing of its grandiose systems and concepts, the rhetorical undermining of its truth-claims -- which would seem to be woman's peculiar vice. If woman is indeed the antithesis of truth, the very principle of unreason, then she can only be counted an ally in Nietzsche's crusade against the great system-building male philosophers, from Plato to Kant and Hegel. Which means that all his anti-feminist diatribes have a double-edged character which can always be turned back, so to speak, against Nietzsche's manifest intent. There occurs, in Derrida's words, a 'regular, rhythmic blindness' in the text which marks those points where a meaning is unloosed beyond its power to acknowledge or 'consciously' grasp.

MPP5-078 NIETZSCHE WAS ULTIMATELY A CRYPTO-FEMINIST

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.203.

Nevertheless the question "What is woman?" is itself suspended by the simple formulation of their common problematic ... she is certainly not to be found in any of the familiar modes of concept or knowledge. Yet it is impossible to resist looking for her' (Spurs, p. 71). Thus Derrida can claim - 'perversely', one might think, but as the upshot of a close exegesis - that Nietzsche is not only ambivalent in his attitude to woman but can even be read as a crypto-feminist resisting all attempts to bypass or sublimate the question of sexual difference.

MPP5-079 NIETZSCHE'S PHILOSOPHY IS PRAGMATIC

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS, 1991, p.2.
The context in which my essays put post-Nietzschean philosophy is, predictably enough, pragmatism. I see Nietzsche as the figure who did most to convince European intellectuals of the doctrines which were purveyed to Americans by James and Dewey. A lot of what Nietzsche had to say can be viewed as following from his claim that " 'knowledge in itself' is as impermissible a concept as 'thing-in-itself' " and his suggestion that "[the categories of reason] represent nothing more than the expediency of a certain race and species -- their utility alone is their 'truth'." His famous description of "How the 'True World' Became a Fable" in Twilight of the Idols is, except for the sneers at Christianity, pretty close to Dewey's vision of Europe's intellectual progress.

MPP5-080 NIETZSCHE'S PERSONAL FLAWS DON'T JUSTIFY IGNORING HIS IDEAS

Roland Bleiker, Ph.D. candidate, Australian National University Political Sciences/Faculties, ALTERNATIVES, January 1997, p.80.

Many of my methodological arguments have been derived from a reading of Nietzsche's work. Nietzsche, of course, is not unproblematic. We know of his Eurocentrism, his disregard for economic factors, or his alleged anti-Semitism. We observe in his pages a strange oscillation between apparent feminist arguments and violent expressions of misogyny. There are dangers in such an approach even if, as Jacques Derrida suggest, this very congruence is rigorously necessary for Nietzsche's deconstructive enterprise. To keep the dialectical and dialogical process running, we must forget Nietzsche as much as we must forget IR theory. This is not to say that we should forget the insight that Nietzsche provided or turn a blind eye toward realist practices of exclusion, but to acknowledge the need to see beyond them in order not to entrench present or future forms of canonical knowledge. Only a constant dialectical process of disturbing and rethinking can maintain hope for a dialogical understanding among peoples and prevent critical approaches to world politics from eventually turning into new orthodoxies.

MPP5-081 NIETZSCHE'S VENERATION OF MASTER MORALITY IS PERNICIOUS

Andre Comte-Sponville, French philosopher, *WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renault, eds., 1997, p.30-1.

The very idea that there are "master morality and slave morality" (BGE, 260) seems to me, as you might guess, suspect; but even if it were the case, how could we grant Nietzsche that slave morality is contemptible -- the morality that teaches pity, the complaisant and obliging hand, the warm heart, patience, industry, humility, and friendliness" (ibid.) -- and that, on the contrary, we must worship master morality, for "such a morality is self-glorification" and imposes the maxim that "one has duties only to one's peers; that against beings of a lower rank, against everything alien, one may behave as one pleases, or 'as the heart desires,' and in any case 'beyond good and evil'" (ibid.)? Should we be surprised that the Nazis loved this book so much? And how, with such a morality, can we fight against French nationalist leader Jean-Marie Le Pen and his ilk?

MPP5-082 NIETZSCHE SYSTEMATICALLY DEFENDED MORALLY OFFENSIVE POSITIONS

Andre Comte-Sponville, French philosopher, *WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renault, eds., 1997, p.31.

Nietzsche is one of the rare philosophers, the only one perhaps (unless one considers Sade to be a philosopher!) who at the same time, and nearly systematically, advocated force against law, violence or cruelty against gentleness, war against peace; who defended egoism, who considered the instincts to be higher than reason and intoxication or the passions higher than serenity, nutritional rules higher than philosophy and hygiene higher than morality; who preferred Pontius Pilate to Christ or to Saint John, Cesare Borgia (a "man of prey," "a kind of superhuman!") to Giordano Bruno and Napoleon to Rousseau; who claimed there are "neither moral nor immoral actions" (while declaring himself "the friend of the evil" and the adversary of the "good!"); who justified castes, eugenics, racism, and slavery; who openly advocated or celebrated barbarity, contempt for the greater number, the oppression of the weak, and the extermination of the sick -- and all this, as we know, a century after the French Revolution, and while keeping up statements about women and about democracy that are, though less absolutely exceptional, no less distressing.

MPP5-083 NIETZSCHE'S ATTEMPT TO OVERTURN ALL PAST VALUES IS A FORM OF BARBARISM

Andre Comte-Sponville, French philosopher, *WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renault, eds., 1997, p.39.

But let us leave aside polemics and experts' quarrels. Whatever may be done to eliminate Nietzsche's most spectacular or most troubling texts, what there is in him of barbarity remains visible at one precise point, the core of his immoralism. Which is? Nietzsche explained himself on this point a thousand times, and it would become the subtitle to *The Will to Power*: all of Nietzscheanism is intended as an attempt at a transmutation (or an overturning, or an inversion, or a transvaluation ...) of all values. Such a project presupposes that we wipe the slate clean of past values -- and that is what I call barbarity.

MPP5-084 NIETZSCHE'S VITALISM JUSTIFIES BARBARISM

Andre Comte-Sponville, French philosopher, *WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renault, eds., 1997, p.37.

To take life as norm and model is to fall into all the naturalist traps (critique of culture, rejection of morality, apology for the instinct and animality) and, in consequence -- since there is no humanity except through culture -- to cease viewing humanity as an irreducible fact (theoretical antihumanism: "To translate man back into nature") and, above all, as a value (practical antihumanism: "Man is something that shall be overcome"). Therefore the justification of the worst, beginning in *The Gay Science*: He that is richest in the fullness of life, the Dionysian god and man, cannot only afford the right of the terrible deed and any luxury of destruction, decomposition, and negation. In his case, what is evil, absurd, and ugly seems, as it were, permissible, owing to an excess of procreating, fertilizing energies that can still turn any desert into lush farmland. (GS, 370) Nietzsche, or the scorched earth policy.

MPP5-085 NIETZSCHE IS A RADICAL RELATIVIST

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.178.

By omitting the certainties of truth from his discussion, Nietzsche presents a radical relativism -- a subjective, even linguistic relativism -- that has entered into postmodernism with a vengeance.

MPP5-086 NIETZSCHE'S RELATIVISM IS MORALLY UNACCEPTABLE

Andre Comte-Sponville, French philosopher, *WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, eds., 1997, p.54.

But there is something more serious. The formulation in question is not only problematic from a logical and philosophical point of view, it is above all dangerous and -- you will forgive me for coming back to this -- morally dangerous. If there is no truth, how are you going to resist lies? What would be the sense of asking, for instance, whether Dreyfus was really guilty or who really set the Reichstag on fire? If there is no knowledge, how will you fight obscurantism and ignorance? If there are no facts but only interpretations, what objections will you make to the revisionists who maintain that the gas chambers are not, precisely, a fact, only a point of view, a mere hypothesis, a mere interpretation by certain historians connected to the Jewish lobby? It may be objected that that was not Nietzsche's point of view. Certainly, those were not his examples. As for his point of view, I wouldn't know. In *The Antichrist*, after having praised Pontius Pilate's attitude ("One Jew more or less -- what does it matter?"), Nietzsche adds: The noble scorn of a Roman, confronted with an impudent abuse of the word "truth," has enriched the New Testament with the only saying that has value -- one which is its criticism, even its annihilation: "What is truth?" (AC, 46). Indeed, any Judge can say that when he needs to condemn an innocent man. But can we accept that? Should we accept it? And how do we prevent it, if there are neither facts nor truths?

MPP5-087 NIETZSCHE CONTRADICTS HIS OWN RELATIVISM

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.179.

None of these statements prevent Nietzsche, in principle, from exercising the privilege of saying as much as he cares to say about ideas and reality, least of all within the very philosophical realm he professes to reject. He even has a full philosophy, by no means far removed from the metaphysics he denounces. Nietzsche presents his 'perspectives', such as his notion of eternal recurrence, as though they have objective validity or facticity. Notwithstanding recent attempts to render this notion a metaphoric quality, Nietzsche himself actually wanted to study the natural sciences to find ontological evidence for this cyclical belief.

MPP5-088 NIETZSCHE'S THOUGHT IS NIHILISTIC

Andre Comte-Sponville, French philosopher, *WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, eds., 1997, p.54.

Nothing remains then but the subjective evaluation (Without a subject, of course!) of the creator of value: this nihilism, Nietzsche goes on, "places the value of things precisely in this, that these values correspond and corresponded to no reality, but only to a symptom of strength on the side of the value-giver, a simplification for the purpose of life" (WP, 13). And, so, from affirmation to affirmation, all anyone affirms anymore is -- himself! Heidegger was right at least on this point: Nietzscheanism really is a monadology without God, without monads even. It is also a subjectivism with neither subject nor object (or, what comes down to the same thing, all absolute relativism), and because of that without limits: "Nothing is true, everything is permitted."

MPP5-089 NIETZSCHEAN INTERPRETATION IS POLITICALLY PERVERSE

Vincent Descombes, philosopher, University of Paris, *WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, eds., 1997, p.83.

Poststructuralism extends orthodox structuralism on at least this: that there is no reason to take seriously what people have to say on what concerns them -- which amounts to taking away their right to speak in order to give it to the experts. By the same token, the consequences of Nietzschean hermeneutics are not limited to epistemology. They reach as far as politics, and it has to be admitted that they are detestable. When he speaks of "war of interpretations," the philosopher acts as if there were a difference only in degree between armed conflict and a public debate. In the texts that have been influenced by "Nietzscheanism," we can observe in exaggerated use of heavily connotated words like violence and terror. Far from leading us to greater vigilance, the generalized use of such notions at every occasion in fact renders them banal.

MPP5-090 NIETZSCHE DETESTED EQUALITY AND DEMOCRACY

Pierre-Andre Taguieff, French philosopher, *WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, eds., 1997, p.190.

One cannot be a Nietzschean the way one can be a Kantian, a Hegelian, or a Marxist. Positions and analyses count less than the manner, or the style, which is led by the power to destroy and the capacity to assert with absoluteness. The destructive aim is directed first of all against pluralist/liberal democracy, the object of supreme detestation. Then it is turned against the socialist utopias that intend to fully realize the virtual possibilities of modern egalitarian democracy.

MPP5-091 NIETZSCHE FAILED TO RECOGNIZE COMMON HUMAN POTENTIALS

Walter Kaufmann, Professor of Philosophy, Princeton, NIETZSCHE: PHILOSOPHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, ANTICHRIST, 1974, p.286.

It is one of Nietzsche's most serious shortcomings -- and has contributed seriously to his "influence " -- that he failed to give any emphasis to this common human potentiality and did not consider the possibility that this potentiality might be quite sufficient to re-establish that "cardinal distinction between man and animal" which Darwin seemed to Nietzsche to have denied.

MPP5-092 NIETZSCHE JUSTIFIED DICTATORSHIP

Pierre-Andre Taguieff, French philosopher, WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, eds., 1997, p.190-1.

After the devastating demystification that is effected by Nietzsche's philosophy, from the moment we attempt to follow it in its ultimate consequences on the political terrain, no expectations become possible that could be fulfilled within the limits of modern democracy. Nothing remains but the exalted call for the "coup de force" and the dream of a redemptive dictatorship. Various generations of Nietzscheanizing aesthetes and pious interpreters have made an effort not to see this terrible logical conclusion, to hide or mask it. It is time to recognize that Nietzsche's pluralism, his hyperrelativistic perspectivism, is, far from being consonant with the regulated pluralism implied by liberal democracy, its total negation.

MPP5-093 NIETZSCHE REJECTED LIBERTY AND DEMOCRACY

Pierre-Andre Taguieff, French philosopher, WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, eds., 1997, p.202.

But the very least we can say on this question, in the face of these Nietzsches dreamed up by tender Nietzschean souls is (sometimes accompanied by tender Nietzschean minds), is that Nietzsche's political thought, as it is found in his texts, is based upon an unconditional rejection of both the aspiration towards equality and the principle of individual liberty (liberty being reserved the "small number"). Which is why, if we feel we must defend democratic and liberal ideals, we cannot call ourselves "Nietzschean," merely as such and without any consequences. Whereas all of the determined adversaries of pluralist democracy (of the "parliamentary chattering"!), of political-juridical liberalism, and of social democracy, can quite legitimately, though in various different ways, lay claim to the Nietzsche heritage.

MPP5-094 RORTY SEES NIETZSCHE'S POLITICS AS ULTIMATELY SADISTIC

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.57.

Nietzsche, Hegel, and Heidegger are all "ironist theorists" rather than "ironist liberals" because they cling to a desire for power and impinge on the public space (they are, to use Lyotard's term, "unpure"). They are neglectful of the fact that their theories are only private poems and cannot have any theoretical significance -- we may choose to adopt some part of their "poem" for our own self-image, but we cannot be told to do so. So long as Nietzsche and Heidegger stick to celebrating their personal canons, Rorty claims they are magnificent. They are, he argues, "figures whom the rest of us can use as material in our own attempts to create a new self by writing a Bildungsroman about our old self" (CIS 119). They become problematic, however, as soon as they overstep the boundary between theory and politics and take themselves to be doing something more than writing private poems: "as soon as either tries to put forward a view about modern society, or the destiny of Europe, or contemporary politics, they become at best vapid, and at worst sadistic" (CIS 120).

MPP5-095 NIETZSCHE'S IDEAS FUELED NAZISM

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY, 1995, p.177.

Until fairly recently, Nietzsche's name conjured up an elitist belief in a 'Superman', a hatred of Christianity, and corrosive attacks on socialism, democracy, and the slavish masses or 'herd'. Indeed, his philosophy was seen as ideological furniture for the various reactionary beliefs that flourished in his time and that came to terrifying fruition in our own century. The favorable recognition he received from rabid reactionaries, and even the imprimatur of the Nazis on his writings, as edited by his reactionary anti-Semitic sister, Elizabeth Forster-Nietzsche -- together with a personal visit by Hitler to the Nietzsche archives -- reinforced the belief that Nietzsche was a precursor of National Socialism.

MPP5-096 NIETZSCHE'S THINKING IS RACIST

Andre Comte-Sponville, French philosopher, WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, eds., 1997, p.33-4.

But there is something more serious that goes beyond biographical or psychological givens. Nietzsche's thinking is racist in its essence through its conjunction (under cover of heredity) of elitism with biologism. "One pays a price for being the child of one's parents," Nietzsche wrote in *The Gay Science* (348), but he is more precise in *Beyond Good and Evil* ([REWRITE](#) 264): "It is simply not possible that a human being should not have the qualities and preferences of his parents and ancestors in his body, whatever appearances may suggest to the contrary. This is the problem of race. If one knows something about the parents, an inference about the child is permissible." For Nietzsche, because of that every human activity depends on what he calls "blood" (Geblut), and even philosophy doesn't escape from this.

MPP5-097 NIETZSCHE'S THOUGHT HAS STRONG NAZI AFFINITIES

Andre Comte-Sponville, French philosopher, *WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, eds., 1997, p.22-3.

Without, obviously, being one of Nazism's causes, or even one of its real sources, Nietzsche belongs nevertheless to the same spiritual world -- antidemocratic, anti-Jewish, antirationalist German thought -- that will also produce Nazism, and that fact explains to some extent the Nietzschean pretensions of this or that Nazi as well as the Nazi strayings of this or that Nietzschean without in any way authorizing them. "A doctrine," Jankelvitich said about Nazism, "in which Heidegger immediately found himself and which so visibly carries Nietzsche's mark." In both cases, that's going too far. Maybe. But it would not be going far enough -- in both cases -- to attribute to chance or to misunderstanding the monstrous proximity that made of Heidegger a Nazi and seemed, though erroneously, to give the Nazis Nietzsches blessing.

MPP5-098 NIETZSCHE'S THOUGHT IS FRIVOLOUS IN LIGHT OF THE HOLOCAUST

Andre Comte-Sponville, French philosopher, *WHY WE ARE NOT NIETZSCHEANS*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, eds., 1997, p.23.

Reading Nietzsche, since that is our common lot, after Auschwitz, I for one have never been able to turn that subsequent history into a total abstraction, and on this subject I have always found the Nietzscheans to be rather lightweight. It is true that "all that is good is light, all that is divine runs on delicate feet." (CW, I). Dear dancers! Go run lightly on the ruins of Oradour, go dance divinely at Auschwitz or Mauthausen! I'm like everybody else: I prefer lightness to heaviness. But I also like what is weighty and serious (Jankelvitich: "it is, not a case of having to be sublime, It is enough to be faithful and serious"). And even if this lightness were, as Nietzsche sometimes claimed, specifically Greek, or French, or Italian -- and God knows that I, like Nietzsche, love those three countries and three cultures! -- it cannot make us forget the great seriousness, the profound gravity, the infinite suffering and the irreplaceable fidelity of the Jewish people.

MPP5-099 NIETZSCHE CAN'T ESCAPE RESPONSIBILITY FOR NAZI MISUSE OF HIS THOUGHT

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.200.

Derrida very firmly rejects this conclusion. He insists that it cannot have been by chance - or owing to some wholly unforeseeable accident of history that Nietzsche's texts took on their bad eminence in the Nazi period. One must ask 'why it is not enough to say that "Nietzsche didn't think this", "didn't intend that", or other evasive locutions. For Nietzsche was quite resigned to the idea that his were 'untimely meditations', that the world was not yet ready for his wisdom, and that only the choice spirits of a later age would fully grasp its significance. Far from disclaiming all responsibility, this puts Nietzsche squarely in the position of taking full credit (or blame) for what was made of his fateful legacy.

MPP5-100 NIETZSCHE'S INTENTIONS DON'T ABSOLVE HIM FROM NAZI MISUSES

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.200-1.

Thus Nietzsche's writings, in their very appeal to what Derrida calls a *meditatio generis futuri*, effectively demand that one read them with an eye to their perversion at the hands of Nazi ideologists. It then becomes necessary to ask 'why the only program of indoctrination [institution d'enseignement] which has ever been able to take full advantage of Nietzsche's teaching has been that of the Nazis' (p. 98). There can be no question of exonerating Nietzsche by driving a wedge between authorial intentions and the after-effects of writing. That they served such an ideological purpose is sufficient indication that more is involved than a gross and stupid misreading of the Nietzschean texts.

MPP5-101 NIETZSCHE WAS DEEPLY MISANTHROPIC
Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.179-80.

Nietzsche's explicit depreciation of humanity, his denigration of reason, and his view of truth as little more than metaphor reverberated among many reactionaries who followed him, people whom he probably would have denounced as *Reichsmenschen*, as he was to designate Richard Wagner for surrendering to German nationalism. His idiosyncratic mind and his brilliant style lures us too easily into his literary orbit and mystifies us with pithy and colorful generalizations. Yet the misanthropic attitudes that underpin so much of his thought should not be ignored.

MPP5-102 NIETZSCHE'S VIEWS ON LANGUAGE PURIFICATION FAIL

Roland Bleiker, Ph.D. candidate, Australian National University Political Sciences/Faculties, *ALTERNATIVES*, January 1997, p.68.

Nietzsche played a crucial historical role in having connected philosophical task with radical reflections on language. Yet, his views on language must be supplemented with more recent contributions, particularly those of the later Wittgenstein. Unlike Nietzsche, Wittgenstein does not consider language to be a representation of "reality" -- not even a distorted one. For him, language "is part of an activity, a form of life." A pure Nietzschean attempt simply to "create new words ... to create ... new things" would go astray in a futile search for a perfect language and, by doing so, fall back into the logical positivism from which the later Wittgenstein so carefully tried to escape.

MPP5-103 NIETZSCHE'S ETHIC IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Francis Fukuyama, Rand Corp. Policy Consultant, *THE END OF HISTORY AND THE LAST MAN*, 1992, p.313.

It is difficult for those of us who believe in liberal democracy to follow Nietzsche very far down the road he takes. He was an open opponent of democracy and of the rationality on which it rested. He hoped for the birth of a new morality that would favor the strong over the weak, that would heighten social inequality and even promote a certain kind of cruelty.

MPP5-104 NIETZSCHEAN RELATIVISM HELPED LEAD TO FASCISM

Francis Fukuyama, Rand Corp. Policy Consultant, *THE END OF HISTORY AND THE LAST MAN*, 1992, p.333.

Nietzsche's relationship to German fascism has been debated at great length, and while he can be defended from the narrow charges of being the forefather of National Socialism's simpleminded doctrines, the relationship between his thought and Nazism is not accidental. Just as in the case of his follower, Martin Heidegger, Nietzsche's relativism shot out all of the philosophical props holding up Western liberal democracy, and replaced it with a doctrine of strength and domination. Nietzsche believed the era of European nihilism, which he was helping to inaugurate, would lead to "immense wars" of the spirit, objectless wars whose only purpose was to affirm war itself.

MPP5-105 HEIDEGGER AND DERRIDA ARE BOTH POSTMODERN THINKERS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.199.

Nevertheless, it might be said that both Heidegger and Derrida share a certain postmodern sensibility. But here one must be extremely precise as to the conceptual implications of what is probably the most overused term in contemporary cultural criticism. Heidegger and Derrida are postmodern to the extent that both maintain a view of the history of philosophy that culminates in a shared understanding of the indigence of the historical present qua "modernity." Since the history of philosophy is covalent with the history of metaphysics (or, for Derrida, the history of logocentrism), and since it is the Cartesian/metaphysical gesture of "enframing" (das Gestell) that defines the essence of modernity (in Heideggerian parlance, it describes the dominant modality in which Being "comes to presence"), both thinkers are postmodern to the extent that they are both "post-philosophical." Only a resolutely post-philosophical culture promises a world in which our relation to metaphysics -- above all, our relation to the necessary linkages between violence and metaphysics ("in a classical philosophical opposition we are not dealing with the peaceful coexistence of a vis-a-vis, but rather with a violent hierarchy," observes Derrida) -- would be qualitatively "other," "different." In sum, Heidegger's avowed antimodernism and Derrida's implicit postmodernism converge on a shared object of criticism: modernity as the site par excellence of a metaphysics of presence. In the case of both thinkers, therefore, the critique of philosophy merges with a withering critique of the historical present.

MPP5-106 FOR HEIDEGGER, THE CHOICE OF LANGUAGE IS CRITICAL

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.35-6.

Heidegger, by contrast, is telling us that the words do matter: that we are, above all, the people who have used those words. We of the West are the people whose project consisted in running down that particular list, in riding that particular escalator. There was no more necessity about getting on that escalator than there is about a poet's use of a given metaphor. But once the metaphor is used, the fate of the poet's audience is, Heidegger thinks, determined.

MPP5-107 HEIDEGGER HAS NO SPECIFIC ETHIC

Michael Inwood, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, *HEIDEGGER*, 1997, p.74.

Heidegger always declined to write a work on ethics. A 'concrete moral code', he implies, does not depend on our possession of an 'ethic as an absolutely binding science' (xvii. 85). We all know, without the help of philosophy or ethics, that we should, in normal circumstances, pay our debts and keep our promises. But when it comes to momentous choices about the conduct of our lives, a concrete moral code is of little help. Either it gives no unequivocal answer to our problem or it is itself open to question. But an 'ethic as an absolutely binding science' would be no use either. It too leaves the matter undecided or is open to question. Heidegger's attitude to fundamental choices is similar to his view of truth. There is no truth in the sense of correspondence to the facts nor are there, in the most fundamental cases, any criteria for telling whether a view is true or not. The best one can do is to be 'primordial', to go back as far as one can towards the source, disregarding the current wisdom of the day. So it is with choice. There are no objectively correct answers to life's basic problems nor any decision procedure for discerning them. The best one can do is to be resolute, to withdraw from the crowd, and to make one's decision in view of one's life as a whole. One's choices, like one's assertions, are always made in a specific situation. What looks good to me in this situation may not look so good to others now or later, or even to myself in a later situation. But there is no remedy for that. The only guarantee that what I do now, writing this book for example, will meet with my approval twenty years hence is to postpone it for twenty years.

MPP5-108 THERE ARE NO ULTIMATE GROUNDS FOR CHOICE

Michael Inwood, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, *HEIDEGGER*, 1997, p.71.

Above all, when Dasein makes its choice, choosing 'for itself a way of being not for the next two days but for its whole life, it has no ultimate reason for making this choice rather than an alternative: 'we define the formal existential idea of the "Guilty" as: Being-the-basis for a Being which has been defined by a "not" -- that is, as Being-the-basis of a nullity' (BT, 283).

MPP5-109 HEIDEGGER GIVES NO CRITERIA FOR MORAL JUDGMENT

Michael Inwood, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, HEIDEGGER, 1997, p.73.

What choice should resolute Dasein make? Can its choice be right or wrong? Are there any criteria for telling whether it is right or wrong? Conscience in the traditional sense is often held to be open to error. Can resoluteness err? Heidegger gives no indication that it can, or that there is any way in which a choice might be assessed apart from the resoluteness in which it is made. After all, authentic Dasein cannot simply follow what they say about right and wrong, nor can it appeal to any established moral code. Any code or criterion that might be suggested to it is itself something that has to be chosen or rejected.

MPP5-110 HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPT OF AUTHENTICITY DESCRIBED

Michael Inwood, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, HEIDEGGER, 1997, p.21-2.

What then is inauthenticity? Whose mind might I have, whose person might I be, if not my own? 'Own' usually contrasts with '(an)other's', and *eigen* contrasts with *fremd*, 'alien, another's'. I might emulate some other person or group -- Heidegger, my spouse, or my academic colleagues -- doing and thinking what they do and think. But more often, Heidegger believes, I conform to what the 'they' does and thinks. Here he exploits a simple German pronoun, *man*, 'one', as in 'One pays one's debts, though English often uses 'we', 'they', 'you', or 'people' where German uses *man*. Heidegger turns this pronoun into an definite noun, *das Man*, the 'one' or the 'they'. The 'they' is others, but it also includes myself in so far as I do, think, and feel what 'they' do, think, and feel. It is not definite named others, it is everyone and no one. I am writing in English, because that is what one does. I grieve at funerals because that is what one does. In so far as I conform to the 'they', I am not my own individual self, but the 'they-self': 'The Self of everyday Dasein is the they-self, which we distinguish from the authentic Self (BT, 129). Dasein is inauthentic in so far as it does things simply because that is what one does. It is authentic in so far as it makes up its own mind, is its own person, or true to its own self. Authenticity need not of course imply eccentricity. Eccentricity can be inauthentic, while conformity to standard practices can be authentically chosen.

MPP5-111 AN AUTHENTIC LIFE DISPLAYS RESOLUTENESS

Michael Inwood, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, HEIDEGGER, 1997, p.72-3.

What then does authentic Dasein do? It becomes resolute, *entschlossen*, a word which is related to *erschlossen*, 'disclosed', and itself means literally 'dis-, un-closed'. Thus: 'Resoluteness [*Entschlossenheit*] is a distinctive mode of Dasein's disclosedness [*Erschlossenheit*]' (BT, 297). Resoluteness discloses Dasein itself in a new way; Dasein surveys its life as a whole from its birth to its death. It discloses the world and things in it, including other people, in a new way. It thus discloses a range of possibilities that are not visible to everyday Dasein, lost in the they. Heidegger's account of resoluteness is coloured by his study of the conversions of St Paul, St Augustine, and Martin Luther. Paul is in the same world after seeing the light on the road to Damascus as he was before, but everything looks different. Resoluteness confers on Dasein's decisions a fateful necessity despite the nullity of its projection: Luther says not 'Perhaps this is what I should do', but 'Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise.' In resoluteness Dasein pulls itself together as well as opens itself up. Later in BT Heidegger uses the term *Augenblick* -- literally 'eye-glance', but the ordinary German for 'instant' or 'moment' -- for the 'moment of vision' in which resolute Dasein assesses the possibilities implicit in its situation and makes a decisive choice.

MPP5-112 SCIENTIFIC RATIONALISM LEADS TO AN UNHUMAN LIFE

George Kateb, political theorist, Princeton, THE INNER OCEAN, 1992, p.145-6.

Heidegger seems to be saying that rationalism is the founding sense of life in the West, from Plato onward, and that it underlies both Western religion and Western science. With the death of God, rationalism delegates its mission solely to science and to technology. Science and technology will allow humanity to remake earthly life or to make it for the first time. Western religion has deposited the insatiable appetite to see the human world on earth as a coherent picture or artifice -- an appetite that survives religion's demise; and if that world is not coherent to begin with, it will be made so. Western humanity is rapacious in its heroic or virtuosic or vengeful endeavor to make itself and the rest of earthly nature measure up. Heidegger holds that this rapacity, this zealous rationalism, aspires to global mastery, that one or another nation will be the vanguard of such mastery, that the immediate result will be an inhuman life more dangerous in its manipulative power, especially genetically, than the risk of extinction itself, and that this very inhumanity will somehow engender its correction, the saying remedy.

MPP5-113 FOR HEIDEGGER, TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY TRANSFORMS HUMANS INTO RESOURCES

Christopher Manes, philosopher and Deep Ecologist, 1990, *Green Rage*, p.143.

By trying to fix beings in utilitarian mode, technological society is converting the world into a "standing reserve" of fungible goods. Things are no longer allowed to present themselves even as objects but are reduced to interchangeable parts in a network of use. This "unworld," as Heidegger calls it, eventually diminishes the humanity it purports to serve as humans themselves are converted into "human resources," with significance only to the degree they are useful to the imperatives of technology.

MPP5-114 OBJECTIFICATION TURNS THE WORLD INTO AN UNWORLD

Joseph Kockelmans, Penn State philosopher, HEIDEGGER AND SCIENCE, 1985, p.251-2.

The doing-away with all that is suprasensible and with all that is "in itself" has been completed and is accomplished by the making secure of the constant reserve by means of which modern man makes secure for himself all resources, material as well as spiritual, and this for the sake of his own security which wills nothing but dominion over all that is, in order that all that is willfully correspond to his will to power. From now on to be for each thing and each being means nothing but to be mastered, controlled, at someone's disposal, to stand-reserve as part of a carefully positioned stock. In his blind desire to guarantee the stability of what is so posited, controlled, and finally used up, man himself is also drawn into this process. He now becomes the most important raw material, insofar as he remains the subject of all consumption. At the same time our world has become an unworld.

MPP5-115 OBJECTIFICATION TURNS THE WORLD INTO A MACHINE

Hanspeter Padrutt, psychiatrist, Daseinanalytisches Institut, Zurich, HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH, Ladelle McWhorter, ed., 1992, p.19-20.

The objectifying method - wanting to measure and calculate everything, for the sake of certainty - has to reduce everything that is to measurable and calculable quantities. Weight, distance, and duration were most easily available to exact measurement; but then the objectifying method reduced nature, too, to a coherence of motions of a whole series of points in a three-dimensional, geometric space, coursing in a one-dimensional time, thought as a time-axis, and reduced things to geometric substances with defined extension. Since this reduction robbed events of their singularity, a repeatable reeling off of the same event became thinkable; repeatable experimenting and engineering set forth on its triumphal procession, and along with it the interpretation of nature and the whole world as a machine. In objectifying subjectivism human beings see themselves as "master and owner of nature" and the world as a large machine. Finally, the objectifying turns back to the subject and, with the supremacy of the machine, itself gets interpreted more and more exclusively as a functional, psychosomatic apparatus.

MPP5-116 FOR HEIDEGGER, TECHNOLOGY IS DEHUMANIZING

Arthur Herman, Professor of History, George Mason, THE IDEA OF DECLINE IN WESTERN HISTORY, 1997, p. 419. Heidegger had been profoundly influenced by Klages's Nietzschean attack on technological capitalism. Heidegger would spend days and weeks climbing in the mountains, and often appeared in class and at Nazi Party rallies dressed in alpine garb and open shirt. He viewed modernity's loss of touch with nature as part of modern man's loss of Being, which technology epitomized: "The object-character of technological domination spreads itself ever more quickly, ruthlessly, and completely." Heidegger complained that not only does Western technology "establish all things as producible in the process of production," it also "delivers the products of production by means of the market." Hence, through technological capitalism "the humanness of man and the thingness of things dissolve into the calculated market value of a market which spans the whole earth."

MPP5-117 THE GREATEST DANGER IS FORGETFULNESS OF THE DISTINCTIVELY HUMAN

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH, 1992, p.4. In numerous essays - in particular the beautiful 1953 essay, "The Question Concerning Technology" - Heidegger speaks of what he sees as the danger of dangers in this, our, age. This danger is a kind of forgetfulness - a forgetfulness that Heidegger thought could result not only in nuclear disaster or environmental catastrophe, but in the loss of what makes us the kind of beings we are, beings who can think and who can stand in thoughtful relationship to things. This forgetfulness is not a forgetting of facts and their relationships; it is a forgetfulness of something far more important and far more fundamental than that. He called it forgetfulness of 'the mystery'.

MPP5-118 WE NEED TO RETHINK OUR RELATIONSHIP TO TECHNOLOGY

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH, 1992, p.1. Heidegger calls us to give thought to - or give ourselves over to thought of - the strangeness of our technological being within the world. His works resound with calls for human beings to grow more thoughtful, to take heed, to notice and reflect upon where we are and what we are doing, lest human possibility and the most beautiful of possibilities for thought be lost irretrievably in forces we do not understand and only pretend we can control.

MPP5-119 NON-CALCULATIVE THOUGHT OPENS NEW POSSIBILITIES

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.3. Heidegger's work is a call to reflect, to think in some way other than calculatively, technologically, pragmatically. Once we begin to move with and into Heidegger's call and begin to see our trying to seize control and solve problems as itself a problematic approach, if we still believe that thinking's only real purpose is to function as a prelude to action, we who attempt to think will twist within the agonizing grip of paradox, feeling nothing but frustration, unable to conceive of ourselves as anything but paralyzed. However, as so many peoples before us have known, paradox is not only a trap; it is also a scattering point and passageway. Paradox invites examination of its own constitution (hence of the patterns of thinking within which it occurs) and thereby breaks a way of thinking open, revealing the configurations of power that propel it and hold it on track. And thus it makes possible the dissipation of that power and the deflection of thinking into new paths and new possibilities.

MPP5-120 WE MUST RETHINK BOTH ECOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.3-4. But of course, those drives and those conceptual dichotomies are part of the very structure of our self-understanding both as individuals and as a tradition and a civilization. Hence, Heidegger's call is a threatening one, requiring great courage, "the courage to make the truth of our own presuppositions and the realm of our own goals into the things that most deserve to be called in question." Heidegger's work pushes thinking to think through the assumptions that underlie both our ecological vandalism and our love of scientific solutions, assumptions that also ground the most basic patterns of our current ways of being human.

MPP5-121 TO TRULY THINK ECOLOGICALLY WE NEED TO RETHINK THE HUMAN SUBJECT

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.vii-viii.

However, in the midst of this urgency, thinking ecologically, thinking Heideggerly, means rethinking the very notion of human action. It means placing in question our typical Western managerial approach to problems, our propensity for technological intervention, our belief in human cognitive power, our commitment to a metaphysics that places active human being over against passive nature. For it is the thoughtless deployment of these approaches and notions that has brought us to the point of ecological catastrophe in the first place. Thinking with Heidegger, thinking Heideggerly and ecologically, means, paradoxically, acting to place in question the acting subject, willing a displacing of our will to action; it means calling ourselves as selves to rethink our very selves, insofar as selfhood in the West is constituted as agent, as actor, as controlling ego, as knowing consciousness. Heidegger's work calls us not to rush in with quick solutions, not to act decisively to put an end to deliberation, but rather to think, to tarry with thinking unfolding itself, to release ourselves to thinking without provision or predetermined aim.

MPP5-122 QUESTIONING IS NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH A FREE RELATIONSHIP WITH TECHNOLOGY

Martin Heidegger, German philosopher, *THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS*, 1977, p.3-4.

In what follows we shall be questioning concerning technology. Questioning builds a way. We would be advised, therefore, above all to pay heed to the way, and not to fix our attention on isolated sentences and topics. The way is a way of thinking. All ways of thinking, more or less perceptibly, lead through language in a manner that is extraordinary. We shall be questioning concerning technology, and in so doing we should like to prepare a free relationship to it. The relationship will be free if it opens our human existence to the essence of technology. When we can respond to this essence, we shall be able to experience the technological within its own bounds.

MPP5-123 RETHINKING LEADS US TO MEDITATIVE THINKING

Hanspeter Padrutt, psychiatrist, Daseinanalytisches Institut, Zurich, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, Ladelle McWhorter, ed., 1992, p.21.

And the re-thinking leads away from objectifying calculating and measuring to phenomenological, meditative thinking, from natural science's reduction of phenomena to the upholding of their fullness, from the perspectival worldview to a regard for the inseparable interconnectedness of thinking, world, human, death, sky, earth, and language: to mindfulness of Ereignis of being and time, of Ereignis of the world-fourfold: Rethinking leads away from progress to "overture."

MPP5-124 MEDITATIVE THINKING IS NEEDED TO CHECK SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Joseph Kockelmans, Penn State philosopher, *HEIDEGGER AND SCIENCE*, 1985, p.253-4.

Is man, then, a defenseless victim at the mercy of the irresistible power of modern science and technology? He would be if man were to abandon any intention of balancing merely calculative thinking with meditative thinking, instrumental rationality with genuinely human rationality. Can a new ground or foundation be granted to man, a foundation out of which man's Being and all his works may flourish in a new way in our atomic age? The answer to this question lies at hand, so near that we all too easily overlook it. This way is the way of meditative thinking.

MPP5-125 MEDITATIVE THINKING ABOUT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IS NEEDED TO PRESERVE THE GENUINELY HUMAN

Joseph Kockelmans, Penn State philosopher, *HEIDEGGER AND SCIENCE*, 1985, p.254-5.

Yet for the time being, man finds himself still in a very perilous situation. For the danger remains that the approaching tide of the technological revolution will captivate and beguile us, because calculative thinking is still quite universally accepted and practiced as the only way of thinking. To overcome this thoughtlessness and avoid that man will have to give up and throw away what genuinely makes him human, we must try to keep meditative thinking alive. We must try to prepare for this thinking by engaging in a more careful meditation about the meaning of modern science and technicity.

MPP5-126 SUSTAINABILITY REQUIRES A BASIC CHANGE IN THE WAY WE ARE

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.189.

Heidegger would agree with Hardin that many problems, including that of the caretaking of our earthly home, are without technical solutions. Only a change in the way we think and feel - in the way we "are" - will allow their redress. Heidegger would also support Hardin's critical challenge to the traditional understanding of freedom.

MPP5-127 WITHOUT A BASIC ATTITUDE CHANGE, TECHNOLOGY WILL REMAIN ENSLAVING

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.217.

The worldly dwelling to which we may aspire is not merely different from that experienced in the midst of willful technological endeavors. There is no true dwelling in an enframed world, only the visitation of a boundless ordering upon it. To dwell is already to have found an abode in the mystery of Being and to have gained release from the possessive mastery of things. Until this occurs, our attempts to control the products of technology will only perpetuate our subordination to its imperative. The greatest irony is that the freedom that has been systematically nurtured and cherished for two and a half millennia in the West has fostered this technological servitude.

MPP5-128 THE IDEA OF ENERGY IS REDUCTIONISTIC
Hanspeter Padrutt, psychiatrist, *Daseinanalytisches Institut, Zurich*, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, Ladelle McWhorter, ed., 1992, p.27.

As sensible and correct as the demand to save energy is, still the concept of energy remains reductionist and ambiguous, because it reduces the light and warmth of the sun, the waterfall in the mountain stream, the roaring of the wind, the burning of wood, and the power of the horse, reduces this whole world to kilowatt hours. Is it not noteworthy that the concept of energy comes from the way language got used in the eighteenth century and, in the historical unfolding of being in this language, is connected with Aristotelian *energeia*, the work-character of beings?.

MPP5-129 ENERGY EXTRACTION UNLOCKS AND EXPOSES NATURE

Martin Heidegger, German philosopher, *THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS*, 1977, p.15.

This setting-upon that challenges forth the energies of nature is an expediting [*Fordern*], and in two ways. It expedites in that it unlocks and exposes. Yet that expediting is always itself directed from the beginning toward furthering something else, i.e., toward driving on to the maximum yield at the minimum expense. The coal that has been hauled out in some mining district has not been supplied in order that it may simply be present somewhere or other. It is stockpiled; that is, it is on call, ready to deliver the sun's warmth that is stored in it. The sun's warmth is challenged forth for heat, which in turn is ordered to deliver steam whose pressure turns the wheels that keep a factory running.

MPP5-130 EVEN RENEWABLE ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES DOMINATE NATURE.

Martin Heidegger, German philosopher, *THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS*, 1977, p.16.

The hydroelectric plant is set into the current of the Rhine. It sets the Rhine to supplying its hydraulic pressure, which then sets the turbines turning. This turning sets those machines in motion whose thrust sets going the electric current for which the long-distance power station and its network of cables are set up to dispatch electricity. In the context of the interlocking processes pertaining to the orderly disposition of electrical energy, even the Rhine itself appears as something at our command. The hydroelectric plant is not built into the Rhine River as was the old wooden bridge that joined bank with bank for hundreds of years. Rather the river is dammed up into the power plant. What the river is now, namely, a water power supplier, derives from out of the essence of the power station. In order that we may even remotely consider the monstrousness that reigns here, let us ponder for a moment the contrast that speaks out of the two titles, "The Rhine" as dammed up into the power works, and "The Rhine" as uttered out of the art work, in Holderlin's hymn by that name. But, it will be replied, the Rhine is still a river in the landscape, is it not? Perhaps. But how? In no other way than as an object on call for inspection by a tour group ordered there by the vacation industry.

MPP5-131 SCIENCE FALSIFIES NATURE BY OBJECTIFYING IT

William Lovitt, Professor of German, Cal State-Sacramento, introduction to Martin Heidegger's *THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS*, 1977, p.xxvi-xxvii.

Science strikingly manifests the way in which modern man as subject represents reality. The modern scientist does not let things presence as they are in themselves. He arrests them, objectifies them, sets them over against himself, precisely by representing them to himself in a particular way. Modern theory, Heidegger says, is an "entrapping and securing refining of the real" (SR 167). Reality as "nature" is represented as a manifold of cause and effect coherences. So represented, nature becomes amenable to experiment. But this does not happen simply because nature intrinsically is of this character; rather it happens, Heidegger avers, specifically because man himself represents nature as of this character and then grasps and investigates it according to methods that, not surprisingly, fit perfectly the reality so conceived.

MPP5-132 MODERN SCIENCE TRAPS NATURE

Martin Heidegger, German philosopher, *THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS*, 1977, p.21.

Modern science's way of representing pursues and entraps nature as a calculable coherence of forces. Modern physics is not experimental physics because it applies apparatus to the questioning of nature. Rather the reverse is true. Because physics, indeed already as pure theory, sets nature up to exhibit itself as a coherence of forces calculable in advance, it therefore orders its experiments precisely for the purpose of asking whether and how nature reports itself when set up in this way.

MPP5-133 WE HAVE LOST CONTROL OVER OUR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Joseph Kockelmans, Penn State philosopher, *HEIDEGGER AND SCIENCE*, 1985, p.253.

In the last decade even I if e has been placed in the hands of scientists who will be able to synthesize, split, and change living substances at will. We all admire these daring research projects without, however, thinking about it. We do not dare to consider that a new attack with technological means is being prepared on the life and nature of man, compared with which the hydrogen bomb means relatively little. Yet it is not the fact that the world is becoming ever more scientific and technical which is really uncanny. For most uncanny is the fact that we are not prepared for this change and are unable to confront meditatively what is really dawning in this age. No single man and no group of men, no government, industry, or science can brake or direct the progress of history in the atomic age; no human organization is capable of gaining control over it.

MPP5-134 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DENY OBJECTS ALL SIGNIFICANCE IN THEMSELVES

William Lovitt, Professor of German, Cal State-Sacramento, introduction to Martin Heidegger's *THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS*, 1977, p.xxx.

The dominion of Enframing as the essence of modern technology and the concomitant presence of the standing-reserve are most clearly seen in the realm of machine technology, where no object has significance in itself and where the "orderability" of everything, from energy and statistics to machines and persons, is all-important. It can be found also, Heidegger says, in the sphere of science, namely, in modern physics. There again, the object, otherwise the hallmark of the sciences, has disappeared. In its stead the relation between subject and object comes to the fore and "becomes a standing-reserve" to be controlled (SR 173).

MPP5-135 SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT IS CALCULATIVE, NOT MEDITATIVE

Joseph Kockelmans, Penn State philosopher, *HEIDEGGER AND SCIENCE*, 1985, p.249-50.

In all these ways of thinking Heidegger continues we always reckon with conditions that are given. We take them into account with the calculated intention of their serving some specific purpose. This calculation is the mark of all thinking that plans and engages in research. Such thinking remains calculating thinking, even if it never works with numbers or never uses computers. Calculating thinking inherently computes. It computes ever more promising and ever new economical possibilities. It races from one project to another; It never stops and never collects itself. It is not meditative thinking that contemplates the meaning that reigns in everything that is.

MPP5-136 THE CALCULATIVE THINKING OF SCIENCE IS NIHILISTIC

Joseph Kockelmans, Penn State philosopher, *HEIDEGGER AND SCIENCE*, 1985, p.250.

There are two basic forms of thinking. Modern man is concerned predominantly with calculative thinking only. This is the form of thinking that is employed in the sciences. The sciences, in manifold ways, claim to present the fundamental form of knowing and of the knowable. Yet to the degree that modern man is in flight from meditative thinking, he exposes himself to the dangers of nihilism.

MPP5-137 SCIENCE LIMITS MEDITATIVE THINKING

Joseph Kockelmans, Penn State philosopher, *HEIDEGGER AND SCIENCE*, 1985, p.252.

Yet, Heidegger continues, we must ask: does this statement spring from reflection, from meditative thinking? Does it ponder on the meaning of the atomic age? No for if we rest content with the statements of science and technology, we remain as far as possible from meditating thinking, and from the reflective insights into the meaning of our own age. For then we forget to ask: precisely what is the ground that enabled modern science and technology to discover and set free new energies in nature?

MPP5-138 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ARE INSEPARABLE

William Lovitt, Professor of German, Cal State-Sacramento, introduction to Martin Heidegger's *THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS*, 1977, p.xxviii-xxix.

We ordinarily understand modern technology as having arisen subsequently to science and as subordinate to it. We consider it to be a phenomenon brought about through scientific advance. Heidegger points out that, on the contrary, modern science and machine technology are mutually dependent upon one another. More importantly, technology, in its essence, precedes and is more fundamental than science. This is no mere statement concerning chronological priority, for the "essence of technology" is the very mode of Being's revealing of itself that is holding sway in all phenomena of the modern age. Man's arrogation to himself of the role of subject in philosophy; his objectifying of nature, life, and history in dealing with them in the sciences; and his calculating and cataloguing and disposing of all manner of things through machine technology - all these alike are expressions of that essence and of that revealing. Technology, so understood, is in no sense an instrument of man's making or in his control. It is rather that phenomenon, ruled from out of Being itself, that is centrally determining all of Western history.

MPP5-139 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY OBJECTIFY THE WORLD

Joseph Kockelmans, Penn State philosopher, *HEIDEGGER AND SCIENCE*, 1985, p.251.

Man, within the subjectness belonging to whatever is, rises up into the subjectivity which is nothing but the positing subjectivity. At the same time the world changes into an object. In this revolutionary objectifying of everything that is, the earth, that which first of all must be put at the disposal of the pro-posing presentation, moves into the midst of the human positing. The earth can show itself as the object of an assault that, in man's will to power, establishes itself as unconditioned objectification. Nature appears everywhere exclusively as the object of modern science and technicity.

MPP5-140 MODERN SCIENCE DESTROYS THE EARTH AND DEBASES LIFE.

Arthur Herman, Professor of History, George Mason, *THE IDEA OF DECLINE IN WESTERN HISTORY*, 1997, p.336-7. The disasters "of world history in this century," Heidegger explained to his audiences, were the result of the Western "will to will." This is modern man's "unconditional objectification of everything present." Like his Frankfurt School contemporaries, he saw this relentless will to will symbolized by modern science. The consequences are horrifying: "the flight of the gods, the destruction of the earth, the standardization of man, the preeminence of the mediocre . . . the darkening of the world." He was forced to conclude: "The spiritual decline of the planet is so far advanced that the nations are in danger of losing the last bit of spiritual energy that makes it possible to see the decline . . . and appraise it as such."

MPP5-141 TECHNOLOGY EXPRESSES A LUST FOR DOMINATION

William Lovitt, Professor of German, Cal State-Sacramento, introduction to Martin Heidegger's *THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS*, 1977, p.xxix.

Modern technology in its essence is a "challenging revealing." It involves a contending with everything that is. For it "sets upon" everything, imposing upon it a demand that seizes and requisitions it for use. Under the dominion of this challenging revealing, nothing is allowed to appear as it is in itself. The rule of such a way of revealing is seen when man becomes subject, when from out of his consciousness he assumes dominion over everything outside himself, when he represents and objectifies and, in objectifying, begins to take control over everything. It comes to its fulfillment when, as is increasingly the case in our time, things are not even regarded as objects, because their only important quality has become their readiness for use. Today all things are being swept together into a vast network in which their only meaning lies in their being available to serve some end that will itself also be directed toward getting every thing under control. Heidegger calls this fundamentally undifferentiated supply of the available the "standing-reserve."

MPP5-142 TECHNOLOGY SEPARATES HUMANS FROM BEING

William Lovitt, Professor of German, Cal State-Sacramento, introduction to Martin Heidegger's *THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS*, 1977, p.xxix-xxx.

This challenging summons, ruling in modern technology, is a mode of Being's revealing of itself. Yet in it, also Being withdraws, so that the summons that thus "enframes" is all but devoid of Being as empowering to be. Compelled by its claim, ordered and orderer alike are denuded. All that is and man himself are gripped in a structuring that exhibits a mere skeleton of their Being, of the way in which they intrinsically are. In all this the essence of technology rules.

MPP5-143 THE TECHNOLOGICAL TEMPERAMENT PREVENTS OUR IDENTIFICATION WITH THE EARTH

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.188.

A discovery of our earthly home is warranted. The chief threat to this discovery is the technological temperament that transforms contemporary human being into a nomad in pursuit of physical and cognitive mastery. Within this nomadic worldview, all problems and mysteries, including those most fundamental to the human condition, are proposed as resolvable. They are expected to dissolve in the fast-moving stream of technological progress.

MPP5-144 TECHNOLOGY REDUCES HUMANS TO ONE-DIMENSIONALITY

Michael Zimmerman, Professor of Philosophy, Tulane, ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS, Fall 1993, p.198.

Anticipating deep ecology, Romantic poets claimed that the technological domination of nature led to the repression of the human spirit as well. More than a century later, Horkheimer and Adorno argued that the domination of outer nature inevitably leads to the domination of inner nature. Similarly, Heidegger and Herbert Marcuse maintained that in the technological era all things, including humans, reveal themselves one-dimensionally: as raw material for enhancing the technological system, which has become an end in itself. Following this tradition, the deep ecologist George Sessions sees "the diminishment of man and the diminishment of the planet and its nonhuman inhabitants as essentially one and the same problem."

MPP5-145 TREATING TECHNOLOGY AS NEUTRAL ENSLAVES US

Martin Heidegger, German philosopher, THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS, 1977, p.4.

Everywhere we remain unfree and chained to technology, whether we passionately affirm or deny it. But we are delivered over to it in the worst possible way when we regard it as some thing neutral; for this conception of it, to which today we particularly like to do homage, makes us utterly blind to the essence of technology.

MPP5-146 MODERN TECHNOLOGY PLACES UNREASONABLE DEMANDS ON NATURE

Martin Heidegger, German philosopher, THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS, 1977, p.14.

The revealing that rules in modern technology is a challenging [Herausfordern], which puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy that can be extracted and stored as such. But does this not hold true for the old windmill as well? No. Its sails do indeed turn in the wind; they are left entirely to the wind's blowing. But the windmill does not unlock energy from the air currents in order to store it. In contrast, a tract of land is challenged into the putting out of coal and ore. The earth now reveals itself as a coal mining district, the oil as a mineral deposit.

MPP5-147 MODERN TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGES NATURE

Martin Heidegger, German philosopher, THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS, 1977, p.15.

The work of the peasant does not challenge the soil of the field. In the sowing of the grain it places the seed in the keeping of the forces of growth and watches over its increase. But meanwhile even the cultivation of the field has come under the grip of another kind of setting-in-order, which sets upon [stellt] nature. It sets upon it in the sense of challenging it. Agriculture is now the mechanized food industry. Air is now set upon to yield nitrogen, the earth to yield ore, ore to yield uranium, for example; uranium is set upon to yield atomic energy, which can be released either for destruction or for peaceful use.

MPP5-148 TECHNOLOGY CONCEALS DEEPER TRUTHS
Martin Heidegger, German philosopher, THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS, 1977, p.28.

The threat to man does not come in the first instance from the potentially lethal machines and apparatus of technology. The actual threat has already affected man in his essence. The rule of Enframing threatens man with the possibility that it could be denied to him to enter into a more original revealing and hence to experience the call of a more primal truth.

MPP5-149 HEIDEGGER THOUGHT TECHNOLOGY MUST BE ABANDONED

Arthur Herman, Professor of History, George Mason, THE IDEA OF DECLINE IN WESTERN HISTORY, 1997, p.419-20.

Heidegger insisted that man had to become the steward, not the master, of nature. Through poetry and art modern man could restore his sense of "the simple onefold of earth and sky, divinity and mortals." The new man would learn to abandon technology and consumerism and accept his humble place in the unity of nature. "Self-assertive man," he wrote in 1926, "whether or not he knows and wills it as an individual, is the functionary of technology."

MPP5-150 TECHNOLOGICAL REASONING LED TO AMERICAN VIOLENCE IN VIETNAM

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.198.

Such a dissociation of American military violence from American cultural discourse would be the reading demanded by the binary logic of Davidson's interpretation of and judgment against Heidegger's synecdochical text, if this last were applied to the American intervention in Vietnam, as significantly it has not been nor even thought. What I mean, rather, is that the American intervention constituted a relay of interventions, which were in essence the same. However uneven the distribution of destruction, they were informed through and through by a hyperinstrumentalized reason - the advanced, end-oriented technology that, according to Heidegger, in extending its dominion over the planet, promises the fulfillment and "end of philosophy." As I will show, they were also the same in the sense that the culpability for the horrible human consequences of this relay of interventions defies moral discrimination.

MPP5-151 TECHNOLOGY LEADS TO NIHILISM

Arthur Herman, Professor of History, George Mason, *THE IDEA OF DECLINE IN WESTERN HISTORY*, 1997, p.337. According to Heidegger, the Western rational animal had evolved into the mechanical laboring animal. Technology forces man and nature to work to the same rationalist timetable, the same "unreasonable demands" modern man makes of himself. The earth, once the sacred source of man's sense of being, was now treated as a commodity. Man extracted from the sacred earth iron and coal by the ton, while its forests were turned into lumber and pulp for reading matter for the mindless masses. The Rhine itself, that hallowed symbol of Germanic and Wagnerian myth, was diverted to create hydroelectric plants to power the capitalists' factories. Heidegger warned that rational civilization had shattered man's place in nature and sense of himself, leaving him "to the giddy whirl of his products so that he may tear himself to pieces and annihilate himself in empty nothingness."

MPP5-152 DESPITE HIS POLITICS, HEIDEGGER'S THOUGHT HELPS TO COUNTER THE RISK OF EXTINCTION

George Kateb, political theorist, Princeton, *THE INNER OCEAN*, 1992, p.13 5.

And Heidegger, though locating the danger to existence in Western rationalism's compulsive effort to convert all nature, and man himself, into something manmade, also contributes to thinking about attachment to existence. One does not have to adopt completely his analysis of the trouble to benefit from his sense of what a change of heart would be. I admit that in separating out various elements from two thinkers who are deliberately elusive I run the risk of misconstruing and misusing them. I grant that this risk is increased when one feels, as I do, that practically every direct remark on politics by either Nietzsche or Heidegger is silly or wicked, and that practically every effort made so far to distill for reconstructionist uses—apart from the nuclear predicament—a political theory or a vision of the good society from their work ends up fascistlike, or reactionary, or communitarian-conservative, and self-deluded to boot. These writers matter politically only for a certain politics, actually the most important politics—the politics of attachment to existence in our age (and coming ages, if there are any) which contain the possibility of extinction. Their saving implications must be wrested from them almost violently.

MPP5-153 HEIDEGGER HELPS TO SUSTAIN AN ATTACHMENT TO EXISTENCE

George Kateb, political theorist, Princeton, *THE INNER OCEAN*, 1992, p.148.

Just as Nietzsche introduces considerations, especially aesthetic ones, which can help sustain us in an attachment to existence beyond all considerations, even aesthetic ones, so Heidegger, by suggesting a way of curing resentment, surpasses the question of resentment in the direction of an overall preservative sense. He explicitly repudiates aestheticism, but his philosophical call is to cultivate a sense that surely bears some resemblance to Nietzsche's sense of beauty. As I have suggested, Heidegger wants to avoid having to praise things in nature anthropocentrically — that is, to praise them because they already serve some human purpose or other or because they seem to reflect outwardly some human likeness.

MPP5-154 HEIDEGGERIAN RECEPTIVITY HELPS OVERCOME DESTRUCTIVENESS

George Kateb, political theorist, Princeton, *THE INNER OCEAN*, 1992, p.148-9.

This receptivity attends to the "isness" or "thereness" of every particular. It is a kind of self-emptying, a living outside oneself, a living ecstatically. It is a cure for habitual immersion in a fatally thoughtless, if gratifying, life. At its most rigorous, Heidegger's hint is that the only person who is truly alive is one who is dead while still living—dead, that is, to what society calls life. In "dying to the world" one for the first time is able to be in the world and not in some fantastical simulacrum of it. One comes back from the dead and starts to live for the first time. One recovers. One lives as an individual, as one not wholly social. Constant awareness of one's literal mortality tinges one's sense of the inessentiality of all things. Thus cured of a driven anthropocentric purposiveness, which in the modern age is tantamount to resentment and an enraged desire to make the world over, one is withdrawn from the pervasive spirit of rapacity and hence from a blind destructiveness.

MPP5-155 THE CONTINGENCY OF LIFE ATTACHES US TO THE WORLD

George Kateb, political theorist, Princeton, *THE INNER OCEAN*, 1992, p.149.

Yet, whatever Nietzsche or Heidegger may say, the horror and the obscenity crowd in again and shove themselves forward; their existence cannot be denied or made glamorous. Existence is not confined to the beautiful. Condemnatory judgments will inevitably be made. Feelings of disgust and horror must shake the soul. But just because the earth is inessential, contingent, not necessary, just because there could have been earthly nothingness—to leave aside the philosophically disputable idea of literal universal nothingness—one must finally attach oneself to earthly existence as it is, whatever it is, and act to preserve it, not just because of its beauty and in spite of its suffering and wickedness, just as we are not allowed to jeopardize it for the sake of any value or purpose that arises within it.

MPP5-156 HEIDEGGER'S SENSE OF RADICALIZED WONDER HELPS COUNTER THE NUCLEAR THREAT
George Kateb, political theorist, Princeton, *THE INNER OCEAN*, 1992, p.147.

But human and natural existence on earth is now imperiled. To the Heideggerian thought that it is an accident that there is not nothing (I know that the word "accident" is inadequate as any such word must be) it now depends on human choice whether one day there will be nothing. The death of God coincides with the birth of humanity-as-God-the-destroyer, able to choose to preserve what it did not and could not create, what was not created and did not have to exist. It is then possible to extend Heidegger's thought and say that the liberated sense of inessentiality and the radicalized wonder that grows out of it when joined now to the novel sense of earthly precariousness provides the scarcely namable passion that informs the affirmation of life and hence the disposition to feel a preserving protective attachment to earthly existence as such in its ungraspable indefiniteness. I know of no philosopher who imparts such a vivid and saving sense of the inessentiality of things as Heidegger. To be sure his sense that the source of the danger lies in man's resentment must be supplemented though not necessarily abandoned. It is an enhancement of Nietzsche's notion of vengeful moralism. Yet even if resentment of the human condition had no conceptual place in the attempt to understand the nuclear situation, Heidegger's thought on the response to it would be of considerable importance.

MPP5-157 HEIDEGGER'S PHILOSOPHY PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR AN ECOLOGICAL POLITICS

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.183.

Heidegger's ecological credentials have become a frequent topic of discussion among philosophers and environmental ethicists. Charles Taylor for example writes that "Heidegger's understanding of language, its telos, and the human essence can be the basis of an ecological politics. founded on something deeper than an instrumental calculation of the conditions of our survival (though that itself ought to be enough to alarm us). It can be the basis of in one sense a 'deep' ecology.

MPP5-158 HEIDEGGER'S PHILOSOPHY ALLOWS US TO COPE WITH THE LIMITS TO GROWTH

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.191.

Ecological concerns have erupted in postmodern times largely as a result of the increasingly apparent limits to human growth. The more these limits are ignored - or worse, viewed as obstacles to be overcome - the graver the crisis becomes. Heidegger develops a philosophy of limits. More to the point, Heidegger describes our freedom as dependent on rather than curtailed by our worldly boundaries. Once the boundaries of human being are experienced neither as a threat to human freedom nor as an affront to human dignity, the tragic attempt to conquer the earth might be abated and the opportunity for its caretaking approached.

MPP5-159 HEIDEGGER'S THOUGHT SUPPORTS SOUND ECOLOGICAL PRACTICES

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.183.

The word ecology derives from the Greek *oikos*, meaning a house, home, or dwelling. Ecological practice, it follows, is about the caretaking of our earthly dwelling place. Heidegger's philosophy of freedom, which promotes the caretaking of home, corresponds to an ecological practice. Commenting on this linkage, Michael Zimmerman writes that "Heidegger's critique of anthropocentric humanism, his call for humanity to learn to 'let things be,' his notion that humanity is involved in a 'play' or 'dance' with earth, sky, and gods, his meditation of the possibility of an authentic mode of 'dwelling' on the earth, his complaint that industrial technology is laying waste to the earth, his emphasis on the importance of local place and 'homeland,' his claim that humanity should guard and preserve things, instead of dominating them - all these aspects of Heidegger's thought help to support the claim that he is a major deep ecological theorist." There is much to what Zimmerman says here, and one might add to his list Heidegger's understanding of *Dasein* as care, and Heidegger's definition of human being as the "shepherd of Being."

MPP5-160 HEIDEGGER'S ONTOLOGY SUPPORTS PRACTICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.185.

The ontology of dwelling engages the meaning of human being in a way that buttresses practical environmental concerns. Heidegger writes, "Mortals dwell in that they save the earth.... To save really means to set something free into its own presencing. To save the earth is more than to exploit it or even wear it out. Saving the earth does not master the earth and does not subjugate it, which is merely one step from spoliation" (PLT 150). The identification of human being as an ontologically care-full, worldly dweller facilitates an actual (ontic) earthly caretaking. Identifying oneself, and one's dignity, by the exercise of disclosive freedom precludes wholesale efforts at control and subjugation. To be free, we remember, is to set free, is to let be. The exercise of freedom coalesces our who and our how, our sense of self and our way of being in the world. To understand human freedom as a disclosure that preserves is to be well on the way to an ecological practice.

MPP5-161 ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS REQUIRE AN OPENING TO BEING

Bill Devall and George Sessions, Professors of Philosophy, Humboldt State University and Sierra College, *DEEP ECOLOGY*, 1985, p.204-5.

From a deep, long-range ecology perspective, whatever is to be done, we are the people to do it; the only people to do it. Direct action means giving active voice to deep ecological intuitions, encouraging more intuitive insights, as well as acquiring more knowledge and understanding of our bioregion, homeland, Nature and ourselves. Much of the process of direct action means attuning our rhapsodic intellect and physical bodies more fully to Heidegger's "round dance of appropriation," that qualify of living fully in the space between Earth, sky, gods and our own mortal flesh, realizing the danger, in our technocratic-industrial society, that acting in such a way is risking our socially-defined self. But we provide an opening to being, to receiving answers to questions we have not yet begun to ask.

MPP5-162 HEIDEGGER REJECTS POSSESSIVE MASTERY OF THE EARTH

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.184.

Despite such caveats, Heidegger's ecological credentials can be supported on a number of grounds. Our sense of self, always in part philosophically derived, impinges on our political, social, and cultural lives. The way we act in the world depends on who we think we are - that is, on how and what we think (of) ourselves. To define human being as care, while not stipulating any particular ethical or environmental attitude or comportment, indicates that human being is not to be defined by its possessive mastery of the world. "It is one thing just to use the earth," Heidegger writes, "another to receive the blessing of the earth and to become at home in the law of this reception in order to shepherd the mystery of Being and watch over the inviolability of the possible."

MPP5-163 HEIDEGGER'S UNDERSTANDING OF HUMANITY MOVES US AWAY FROM TECHNOLOGICAL EXPLOITATION

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.184-5.

Relations with others and nature would develop in a less technologically exploitative and more preservative, ecological direction, Heidegger suggests, once the understanding of human being as care displaces the subjectivism that grounds out metaphysical self-understandings. In writing that "man is not the lord of beings. Man is the shepherd of Being," Heidegger gestures at the changes to our concrete, worldly relationships that might ensue from changes in our ontological relationships.

MPP5-164 BIOREGIONALISM IS THE MOST ECOLOGICALLY SOUND

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.187.

In advocating a disclosive, caretaking orientation toward nature, Heidegger supports what in ecological circles is called bioregionalism. Bioregionalism is an orientation toward environmental care that advocates human guardianship of nature organized around relatively small communities sustainably integrated into local ecosystems. Likewise, Heidegger stresses that intimate ties to soil and locality are the antidote for the destructive exploitation of the earth and the technological manipulation and extortion of nature. Heidegger envisions living and working with, rather than against, natural processes. In contrast to high-tech agribusiness, for example, Heidegger affirms that "the work of the peasant does not challenge the soil of the field. In the sowing of the grain [the peasant] places the seed in the keeping of the forces of growth and watches over its increase" (QT 15). The remedy for our earthly homelessness, Heidegger maintains, "remains most readily possible and most enduringly effective there where the powers of encompassing nature and the echo of historical tradition abide together side by side.... Only the rural regions and the small country towns are today still adequate to this decisive task."

MPP5-165 PRESENT PRACTICES HAVE PRODUCED ECOLOGICAL DISASTER

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.2.

Thinking today must concern itself with the earth. Wherever we turn - on newsstands, on the airwaves, and in even the most casual of conversations everywhere - we are inundated by predictions of ecological catastrophe and omnicidal doom. And many of these predictions bear themselves out in our own experience. We now live with the ugly, painful, and impoverishing consequences of decades of technological innovation and expansion without restraint, of at least a century of disastrous "natural resource management" policies, and of more than two centuries of virtually unchecked industrial pollution - consequences that include the fact that millions of us on any given day are suffering, many of us dying of diseases and malnutrition that are the results of humanly produced ecological devastation; the fact that thousands of species now in existence will no longer exist on this planet by the turn of the century; the fact that our planet's climate has been altered, probably irreversibly, by the carbon dioxide and chlorofluorocarbons we have heedlessly poured into our atmosphere; and the mind-boggling fact that it may now be within humanity's power to destroy all life on this globe.

MPP5-166 HEIDEGGER'S PHILOSOPHY BEST SAFEGUARDS ECOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.186.

Heidegger's unwillingness to exchange anthropocentrism for biocentrism, however, does not weaken his contribution to an ecological politics. Arguably, it makes his contribution more significant. Celebrating the unique capacities of human being to disclose in a way that preserves best ensures humanity's caretaking of the earth and the world. The fostering of human freedom, understood as a disclosive letting-be rather than a sovereign control, is precisely the measure that will best safeguard the earth's ecological diversity and health. One of Heidegger's favorite Heraclitean fragments is "Nature loves to hide." Nature loves to hide, one might say, because it resists becoming an open book. However we disclose the natural world, something else remains hidden yet beckoning: relationships of interdependence, evolutionary legacies, biological and aesthetic properties. The vast diversity of nature solicits the manifold modes of disclosure to which humans are heir because of their capacity for freedom. Hence our disclosive guardianship of nature marks, at the same time, the preservation of the greatness and uniqueness of human being.

MPP5-167 TRANSFORMATIVE HEIDEGGERIAN RETHINKING IS NEEDED TO AVOID DESTROYING THE EARTH

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.ix. In "Earth-Thinking and Transformation," Kenneth Maly shows us ways in which Heideggerian reflection upon the fact of our being as earth-dwellers can be transformative of our thinking at its very core and therefore transformative of our world. Maly believes that our culture's insistence upon a divorce between rationality and other ways of thinking and knowing has resulted in an impoverishment of our being and a destructive distancing from the earth that gives rise to, shelters, and sustains us. When we take ourselves and the earth as fixed entities to be comprehended by rational observation and theoretical constructs we lose sight of earth and being-human as process, as forever unfixed, as changing, growing, outgrowing, as living and therefore dying. It is only when we begin to think human being and earth as unfixed, as always undergoing transformation in a living unfolding of our/its being that a new, less destructive understanding of humanity-in/on-earth can come into being. And such understanding, Maly would argue, is absolutely necessary if we are to avoid destroying the earth.

MPP5-168 "LETTING BE" MEANS RESPECTFUL INTERACTION WITH THE WORLD

Michael Zimmerman, Professor of Philosophy, Tulane, *ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS*, Fall 1993, p.203.

Heidegger and deep ecologists both call on humanity to "let beings be." For Heidegger, this phrase has at least three meanings. First, it means to open up the ontological clearing in which things can disclose themselves and thus "be." Second, it means to allow things to show themselves without undue human interference. Third, it means to interact with things in respectful ways to bring forth not only the goods needed for human life, but also new creations, including works of art.

MPP5-169 WAITING IS AN ANTIDOTE TO TECHNOLOGICAL HYPERACTIVITY

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.77.

Waiting, it seems, is a good antidote for the technological hyperactivity to which we are prone. But there is more here. Once we stop "fooling ourselves" and escape the seductive powers of calculative thought, we realize that our most basic existential situation, our who and where, remains every bit a mystery. This realization is, minimally, the prerequisite for releasement. Life, after all, is waiting.

MPP5-170 RELEASMENT ALLOWS US TO DWELL IN THE WORLD IN A DIFFERENT WAY

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.216-7.

Awaiting gods is an openness to the mystery. Receiving the sky is a releasement toward things. Together they allow our liberation from enframing without at the same time forswearing our technological achievements and skills. Awaiting and receiving, openness and releasement, are summoned by recollective thinking. Only thus is the mood of homelessness attendant on technological ordering displaced. "Releasement toward things and openness to the mystery belong together," Heidegger writes. "They grant us the possibility of dwelling in the world in a totally different way."

MPP5-171 RELEASMENT ALLOWS US TO COME TO TERMS WITH TECHNOLOGY

Joseph Kockelmans, Penn State philosopher, *HEIDEGGER AND SCIENCE*, 1985, p.254.

As Heidegger sees it, *Gelassenheit* in regard to beings and openness to the mystery belong together. By means of them, thought can grant us in principle the possibility of dwelling in the world in a new way. They promise us a new foundation upon which we can stand and from which we can endure in the world of technicity without being periled by it.

MPP5-172 THE CONCEPT OF "LETTING BE" EXPRESSES HEIDEGGER'S BIOCENTRISM

Bill Devall and George Sessions, Professors of Philosophy, Humboldt State University and Sierra College, *DEEP ECOLOGY*, 1985, p.99.

Near the end of his life, Heidegger realized that the poetic voice was a clearer expression of intuition than formal philosophy. He arrived at a biocentric position in which humans would "let beings be" Heidegger wrote: Mortals dwell in that they receive the sky as sky. They leave to the sun and the moon their journey, to the stars their courses, to the seasons their blessing and their inclemency; they do not turn night into day nor day into a harassed unrest.

MPP5-173 "LETTING BE" OVERCOMES THE FORCES OF RESENTMENT

George Kateb, political theorist, Princeton, *THE INNER OCEAN*, 1992, p.148.

Letting things be is taking each as itself and not coercing it into human use or human likeness. Not coercing is a strenuously self-denying act. Even when human beings make things, the spirit of their making should be of letting the materials they work on slowly reveal themselves. (Perhaps Heidegger's conception of letting things be can also be extended - but not as he himself seems to extend it - to relations between people, whether private or institutional.) Human beings must learn to stop forcing or projecting or imposing themselves on otherness; rather they must preserve it, guard it, shepherd it.

MPP5-174 HEIDEGGER'S PERSPECTIVE ALLOWS RELEASEMENT

Michael Zimmerman, Professor of Philosophy, Tulane, *ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS*, Fall 1993, p.215.

Once it is revealed that to be human means to be the openness in which things can manifest themselves and thus "be " it becomes possible to identify with and to care about all things not just the ego body. Paradoxically, when one becomes "nothing" (the openness), one simultaneously becomes "everything " in the sense that one no longer identifies with and defends a particular phenomenon - the ego body - but rather can identify with all things and "let them be." Mystics argue that their path is not a flight into otherworldly abstraction but instead the most concrete way of encountering things Spinoza for example maintained that at the most realized level of awareness one discerns that each particular thing is God. Presumably such ontological realization would elicit major changes in one's everyday treatment of things!

MPP5-175 MORTALS RESCUE THE EARTH BY LETTING IT BE

Hanspeter Padrutt, psychiatrist, Daseinanalytisches Institut, Zurich, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, Ladelle McWhorter, ed., 1992, p.17-18.

Mortals rescue the earth by not exploiting it and by letting the earth be earth. Letting be means not only letting the earth be at rest but also letting its being come forth to intimate its root unfolding, to let earth emerge, including emerge into flora and fauna. Mortals receive the sky by not conquering it and by letting it be coming forth and drawn to day and night the seasons of the year, the weather patterns - also foregoing that technical dialectics which makes night into day and winter into summer.

MPP5-176 RELEASEMENT REQUIRES RESOLUTE DEDICATION, NOT WILLFUL STRIVING

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.246.

Releasement is to be sought with resolute determination. But it is only truly achieved once one no longer wills it. Resolute determination in the absence of willful striving constitutes waiting. The groundwork for this position is laid in Heidegger's critique of subjectivism. Metaphysical subjectivism culminates in the (Nietzschean) will to will, and the rule of enframing. Releasement marks the successful struggle against subjectivism wherein the subject/object dichotomy no longer structures perception and action, and the will to will is placed in abeyance. At this point one may act in and on the world without at the same time becoming invested (as a subject) in the bending of reality (as an object) to the dictates of will.

MPP5-177 RELEASEMENT REQUIRES THE ABANDONMENT OF WILLING.

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.76.

How are we to understand this letting-be? The teacher in Heidegger's "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking" indicates that "when we let ourselves into releasement . . . we will non-willing," to which the scientist responds: "Releasement is indeed the release of one self from transcendental re-presentation and so a relinquishing of the willing of a horizon. Such relinquishing no longer stems from a willing, except that the occasion for releasing oneself ... requires a trace of willing. This trace, however, vanishes while releasing oneself and is completely extinguished in releasement."

MPP5-178 FREEDOM REQUIRES RELEASUREMENT

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.75.

Summing up Schelling's thesis, Heidegger remarks that freedom demands pantheism (ST 85). That is, freedom demands openness to the impenetrable immanence of Being in beings. It also demands what Heidegger calls "releasement toward things" (*Gelassenheit zu den Dingen*). Heidegger borrows the term *Gelassenheit* from Meister Eckhardt. It literally means a letting-be. The dispositions that best prepare human being for the visitations of freedom, then, are an ontological openness to no-thingness (Being) combined with a receptive releasement toward things (beings). Human freedom for Heidegger, particularly after his "turning" of the mid-1930s, is fundamentally and foremost an openness and letting-be.

MPP5-179 RELEASUREMENT ALLOWS OUR INTUITIVE LEAP TO BEING

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.244-5.

Heidegger identifies releasement as that which allows our intuitive leap to Being. The closest Eastern equivalent of Heidegger's notion of releasement is the Taoist understanding of *wu wei*. "*Wu wei*" is often translated as "noninterference." It refers to a disposition of unattachment wherein willful behavior is suspended. One stills and empties one self, abjuring willfulness in patient preparation for the vision of what is. Lao Tzu affirms that "if any one should wish to get the kingdom for himself, and to effect this by what he does, I see that he will not succeed. The kingdom is a spiritlike thing, and cannot be got by active doing. He who would so win it destroys it; he who would hold it in his grasp loses it.... the kingdom is made one's own (only) by freedom from action and purpose." Similarly, Heidegger writes that "in-dwelling in releasement ... mean[s] exulting in waiting, through which we become more waitful and more void.... [It is] pure resting in itself of that willing, which, renouncing willing, has released itself to what is not will" (DT 82, 85). Taoist freedom is much like Heidegger's disclosive freedom. Released from willfulness, one achieves as a witness what one is denied as a master and possessor.

MPP5-180 RELEASUREMENT ISN'T PASSIVE BUT LEADS TO DISCLOSIVE FREEDOM

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.94.

Disclosive freedom is facilitated by releasement toward things and openness to the mystery of Being. But this is not to say that freedom is achieved without effort and enjoyed in passivity. Heidegger insists that "releasement toward things and openness to the mystery never happen of themselves. They do not befall us accidentally. Both flourish only through persistent, courageous thinking" (DT 56). Persistent, courageous thinking provides the foundation on which disclosive freedom gains its foothold in the world. Indeed, there is a unique and original freedom to be practiced in thought itself.

MPP5-181 "LETTING BE" ISN'T A RETREAT FROM THE WORLD

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.83.

Disclosive freedom is always the freedom resolutely to will openness to Being and releasement to beings. Openness and releasement do not preclude, but rather invite, activity and thought. In turn, letting-be is not tantamount to a retreat from the world. Quite the opposite: it entails the formation of worldly relationships made all the more dynamic because they are no longer constrained by the habits of possessive mastery. Heidegger writes: "The freedom to reveal something overt lets whatever 'is' at the moment be what it is. Freedom reveals itself as the 'letting-be' of what-is.... The phrase we are now using, namely the 'letting-be' of what-is, does not, however, refer to indifference and neglect, but to the very opposite of them. To let something be is in fact to have something to do with it.... To let what-is be what it is means participating in something overt and its overtness in which everything that 'is' takes up its position."

MPP5-182 "LETTING BE" ISN'T PASSIVE

Michael Zimmerman, Professor of Philosophy, Tulane, *ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS*, Fall 1993, p.203.

"Letting things be," then, is not to be understood merely passively, as a disinterested "bearing witness" to things, but also actively, as working with things to bring forth new possibilities. Such authentic producing is to be distinguished from technological producing at the end of the history of productionist metaphysics. Technological production forces entities to reveal themselves inappropriately, e.g., animals as mere machines.

MPP5-183 RELEASUREMENT FOSTERS ACTIVE BEING-IN-THE-WORLD

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, *TIMELY MEDITATIONS*, 1995, p.245.

Releasement does not signal passivity, a lack of power to act, or a denial of the will to live (DT 80). Releasement fosters an active Being-in-the-world, one whose dynamism arises out of the absence of attachment to specific models of the future. Taoists have a similar perspective. Chuang Tzu asserts that "he who practices the Tao, daily diminishes his doing. He diminishes it and again diminishes it, till he arrives at doing nothing. Having arrived at this non-inaction, there is nothing that he does not do." Similarly, Buddhist practitioners seek releasement from will or craving so as to be free from karma.

MPP5-184 THE ECOLOGICAL MOVEMENT STILL DISPLAYS OBJECTIFYING REDUCTIONISM

Hanspeter Padrutt, psychiatrist, Daseinanalytisches Institut, Zurich, HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH, Ladelle McWhorter, ed., 1992, p.27.

A few years after the Americans landed on the moon, the Club of Rome published those famous computer predictions, entitled "The Limits of Growth," which showed that, if things continue the way they have gone on "spaceship earth," soon it could not go on. Better founded and more oppressing still was the study commissioned by President Jimmy Carter, which appeared in 1980 with the title Global 2000 Study. Both studies are honest appraisals and cautious predictions, which can shake up humankind. However, since they take for granted the basis of "world-models" or "spaceship earth," they can also solidify the opinion that the world is a machine. Spaceship earth and the world model correspond to a worldview of objectifying subjectivism and are snares along the way of descent from the throne of master and owner of nature. Actually the question emerges whether the objectifying reductionism of natural science - which can be detected in many notions of the ecological movement - should not also become questionable for this movement.

MPP5-185 HEIDEGGER QUESTIONS THE ECOLOGISTS' "RESPECT FOR LIFE"

Hanspeter Padrutt, psychiatrist, Daseinanalytisches Institut, Zurich, HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH, Ladelle McWhorter, ed., 1992, p.28.

All ecological thought patterns that proceed from the evolution of living creatures remind us of the shortsighted hubris and the objectifying subjectivism of the astronaut perspective of evolutionary biology. Here I am thinking of the publication *A Planet Is Being Plundered* by Herbert Grohl and *The Eight Deadly Sins of Civilized Humanity* by Konrad Lorenz - and then of the enthusiastic representatives of the so-called evolutionary theory of knowledge, which traces our present ecological mistakes back to the condition of our evolution and expects the rescue from danger to come from this biological self-enlightenment of humans. Heidegger's putting the biological worldview into question has also to do with the appeal to "life," which enjoys some popularity today with the ecological movement, whose precursor was Albert Schweitzer with his "respect for life."

MPP5-186 BIOLOGICAL THOUGHT IS REDUCTIONISTIC
Hanspeter Padrutt, psychiatrist, Daseinanalytisches Institut, Zurich, HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH, Ladelle McWhorter, ed., 1992, p.27-8.

The worldview of biology, too, has shaped many concepts and thought patterns of the ecological movement and based them in the objectifying subjectivism. The word environment (Umwelt) in "environmental protection" is such a concept. The only thing that this concept has in common with what is called in Being in Time the most close-at-hand, domestic, surrounding world of humans is the name. The environment meant by biology is the surroundings in whose milieu, in whose middle-place, the organism resides. The opposition of organism and its environment as well as the concept of organism itself correspond to a characteristic amalgamation of machine and subject. The organism and its environment, e.g., the praying mantis and the meadow, are thereby given a mechanical explanation - and along with that the organism is seen from the human vantage point, anthropomorphically, as subject. But natural science's reduction and anthropomorphic interpreting of life are a basic assumption for the theory of evolution.

MPP5-187 HUMANS HAVE ABANDONED TRUE THOUGHT FOR INSTRUMENTAL RATIONALITY

Joseph Kockelmans, Penn State philosopher, HEIDEGGER AND SCIENCE, 1985, p.249.

The growing thoughtlessness springs from a process that gnaws at the very marrow of man today; today man is in flight from thinking. Part of this flight is that man will neither see nor admit it. He even flatly denies this flight from thinking. In his view, there never was a time that there were more far-reaching plans, so many inquiries in so many areas, and so much research carried on as passionately as today. In Heideggerian view, this is true, and this display of ingenuity and deliberation certainly has its great usefulness; it is even indispensable. Yet it is true also that this form of thinking is a thinking of a very special kind. We often call it a form of "instrumental rationality."

MPP5-188 IT'S POSSIBLE TO ESCAPE CALCULATIVE AND ACHIEVE MEDITATIVE THINKING

Joseph Kockelmans, Penn State philosopher, HEIDEGGER AND SCIENCE, 1985, p.250.

Thus there are two modes of thinking, calculative and meditative thinking, and each is justified in its own way. When we say that contemporary man is in flight from thinking, we mean meditative thinking. Many people will say that this form of thinking serves no meaningful purpose; it is worthless for dealing with real issues. Furthermore, it is above the reach of ordinary understanding. It does not just happen by itself; it demands practice; it requires a great effort; and it is in need of even more delicate care than any other form of thinking or even any craft. Whether all of this is correct or not, it is nonetheless a fact that anyone can follow the path of meditative thinking in his own manner and within his own limits, because man is indeed a thinking, i.e., a meditating being. Meditative thinking need not be high-flown; it is enough that we dwell on what lies close and meditate on what concerns us here and now. This is modern science.

MPP5-189 REJECTION OF ANALYTICAL THINKING CAN LEAD TO RELEASUREMENT

Bill Devall and George Sessions, Professors of Philosophy, Humboldt State University and Sierra College, *DEEP ECOLOGY*, 1985, p.99.

Heidegger called his readers to step back to a "reversal" of our usual analytical thinking and to use our intuitive power. By stepping back we may open the way for releasement of Being.

MPP5-190 MANAGERIAL THINKING TURNS PEOPLE AND THE EARTH INTO COMMODITIES

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.6.

What is now especially dangerous about this sense of our own managerial power, born of forgetfulness, is that it results in our viewing the world as mere resources to be stored or consumed. Managerial or technological thinkers, Heidegger says, view the earth, the world, all things as mere Bestand, standing-reserve. All is here simply for human use. No plant, no animal, no ecosystem has a life of its own, has any significance, apart from human desire and need. Nothing, we say, other than human beings, has any intrinsic value. All things are instruments for the working out of human will. Whether we believe that God gave Man dominion or simply that human might (sometimes called intelligence or rationality) in the face of ecological fragility makes us always right, we managerial, technological thinkers tend to believe that the earth is only a stockpile or a set of commodities to be managed, bought, and sold. The forest is timber; the river, a power source. Even people have become resources, human resources, personnel to be managed, or populations to be controlled.

MPP5-191 THE IDEA OF TECHNOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT DESTROYS OTHER PATHS OF THINKING

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.5-6. This dream of Hawking's is a dream of power; in fact, it is a dream of absolute power, absolute control. It is a dream of the ultimate managerial utopia. This, Heidegger would contend, is the dream of technological thought in the modern age. We dream of knowing, grasping everything, for then we can control, then we can manage, everything. But it is only a dream, itself predicated, ironically enough, upon concealment, the self-concealing of the mystery. We can never control the mystery, the belonging together of revealing and concealing. In order to approach the world in a manner exclusively technological, calculative, mathematical, scientific, we must already have given up (or lost, or been expelled by, or perhaps ways of being such as we are even impossible within) other approaches or modes of revealing that would unfold into knowledges of other sorts. Those other approaches or paths of thinking must already have been obliterated; those other knowledges must already have concealed themselves in order for technological or scientific revelation to occur.

MPP5-192 THE MANAGERIAL APPROACH ULTIMATELY FAILS

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.6.

The danger of a managerial approach to the world lies not, then, in what it knows - not in its penetration into the secrets of galactic emergence or nuclear fission - but in what it forgets, what it itself conceals. It forgets that any other truths are possible, and it forgets that the belonging together of revealing with concealing is forever beyond the power of human management. We can never have, or know, it all; we can never manage everything.

MPP5-193 MORAL DISCOURSE IS PART OF TECHNOLOGY

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.viii.

The first essay, "Guilt as Management Technology: A Call to Heideggerian Reflection," gives an overview of Heidegger's thinking on technology and discusses Heidegger's call for reflection as opposed to instrumental or calculative thinking about the earth. It carefully distinguishes reflection, in Heidegger's sense' from moral stock-taking or ethical judgment. In fact, it suggests that moral discourse and practice are themselves forms of technology, sets of techniques for maintaining control over self and other. As such, morality shows itself as a danger, as part of the technological, calculative, managerial thinking that currently endangers the earth itself. The essay closes with a kind of warning. If it is the case that morality is part of technological discourse and practice rather than a separable discourse whose purpose is critique, then moral condemnation and moral guilt are reinstantiations of the calculative. Thus, our tendency to feel guilty about our treatment of the earth is not a change of heart but is rather a perpetuation of human domination.

MPP5-194 ETHICAL THOUGHT IS PART OF TECHNOLOGY

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.8.

When we respond to Heidegger's call as if it were a moral condemnation, we reinstate a discourse in which active agency and its projects and responsibilities take precedence over any other way of being with the earth. In other words, we insist on remaining within the discourses, the power configurations, of the modern managerial self. Guilt is a concept whose heritage and meaning occur within the ethical tradition of the Western world. But the history of ethical theory in the West (and it could be argued that ethical theory only occurs in the West) is one with the history of technological thought. The revelation of things as to-be-managed and the imperative to be in control work themselves out in the history of ethics just as surely as they work themselves out in the history of the natural and human sciences.

MPP5-195 A GUILTY RESPONSE TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS SIMPLY ENTRENCHES MANAGERIAL ATTITUDES

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.8-9. Therefore, when we react to problems like ecological crises by retreating into the familiar discomfort of our Western sense of guilt, we are not placing ourselves in opposition to technological thinking and its ugly consequences. On the contrary, we are simply reasserting our technological dream of perfect managerial control. How so? Our guilt professes our enduring faith in the managerial dream by insisting that problems - problems like oil spills, acid rain, groundwater pollution, the extinction of whales, the destruction of the ozone, the rain forests, the wetlands - lie simply in mismanagement or in a failure to manage (to manage ourselves in this case) and by reaffirming to ourselves that if we had used our power to manage our behavior better in the first place we could have avoided this mess? In other words, when we respond to Heidegger's call by indulging in feelings of guilt about how we have been treating the object earth, we are really just telling ourselves how truly powerful we, as agents, are. We are telling ourselves that we really could have done differently; we had the power to make things work, if only we had stuck closer to the principles of good management. And in so saying we are in yet a new and more stubborn way refusing to hear the real message, the message that human beings are not, never have been, and never can be in complete control, that the dream of that sort of managerial omnipotence is itself the very danger of which Heidegger warns.

MPP5-196 IMPERIALIST VIOLENCE IS IMPLICIT IN HUMANISM

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.148.

Indeed, if, as there is every justification to do, we conflate the passages from the lectures on the Parmenides and the "Letter on Humanism" addressing the Roman reduction of Greek thinking, we arrive at the following proposition: Truth and power, knowledge production and repression, according to Heidegger, are not external to each other (as they are assumed to be in the discursive practices of humanism), but continuous and complicitous with each other. To put it in terms of the figure informing this relation, the circle of truth/beauty/perfection is also the circle of domination. The violence that accompanies overt imperialism is not incommensurate with but latent in the truth of humanism. Remarkably like Foucault, the benign discursive practices of humanism collectively constitute a "regime of truth."

MPP5-197 NAZISM WAS AN EXPRESSION OF HUMANISM

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.148-9.

What Heidegger indirectly seems to be saying in these texts, at least in part, is that the nihilistic Nazi imperial project (which was about to culminate in Auschwitz) was not an aberration from the circular humanist logic of the Occident but its concrete and horribly explicit fulfillment. Heidegger indeed failed later to discriminate between the civilized barbarism of "Europe" and the Nazis' unspeakable project to exterminate the Jews, and for this he is profoundly culpable. But this (as I shall argue at length in the last chapter) is not reason enough to write off his resonant equation.

MPP5-198 HUMANISM JUSTIFIES IMPERIALISTIC DOMINATION

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.143-4.

To put this relay of knowledge/power relations in terms of the metaphors of the centered circle privileged by the humanist tradition, the self-present subject as citizen/soldier produced by the discourse of *veritas* and its *paideia* became the structural model of the *Civitas*. Just as the humanist anthropologists justifies the domestication by "cultivation" of the differential "provincial" energies of immature and deviant youth, so the self-present Capitol, or the Metropolis, justifies the colonization of the barbarian energies of the provincial peoples, who, as "other," threaten its civilized space. It is no accident, I would add to Heidegger's genealogy of humanism, that the English words "cultivate" and "culture" privileged by this tradition, especially since the Enlightenment, are cognates of "colonize" (from the Latin *colonus*, "tiller," "cultivator," "planter," "settler") and *colere* (to cultivate or plant).

MPP5-199 HUMANISM IS GROUNDED IN ROMAN IMPERIALISM

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.147.

What should not be overlooked, however, is the historically specific context Heidegger's Parmenides addresses. At its most general level, it constitutes a genealogy of modern power relations. More specifically, it demonstrates that the "strong" discursive practices of what he calls "humanism" in his postwar "Letter on Humanism" have their origins, not in Greek thought, as it is assumed in modern Europe at large, but in the circular (anthropo)logic, the disciplinary pedagogy, and the imperial practice of Rome. It is no accident that in the latter half of the passage Heidegger carefully distinguishes between two kinds of domination that have a single origin.

MPP5-200 HUMANISM HAS LED TO NEOIMPERIALIST PLANETARY DOMINATION

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.152.

What needs to be emphasized provisionally is that the planetary technology of power informing the discourse and practice of Western modernity is not simply the consequence of the rise of the scientific/technological episteme of the Enlightenment, as Foucault's genealogy might suggest. Nor, on the other hand, is it simply the consequence of philosophy, as Heidegger's discourse all too insistently affirms. It is, as a reading of Heidegger with Foucault or Foucault with Heidegger will suggest, the consequence of both. A dialogue between their discourses will show that the overdetermined sciences and the "residual" humanities -- the "two cultures" that the dominant culture represents as adversaries -- are, in fact, different instruments of the anthropo-logos, the discourse of Man, and thus complicitous in the late capitalist West's neoimperial project of planetary domination.

MPP5-201 NAZISM IS A HUMANISM

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.149.

As Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe puts it against those recent detractors of Heidegger's thought at large, who represent the horror perpetrated by the Nazi regime as the triumphal vindication of humanist democracy: Nazism is a humanism, insofar as it is grounded on a humanitas that in its view is more powerful, that is to say more effective, than any other. The subject of absolute auto-creation, even if it transcends all the determinations of the modern subject in a position that is immediately natural (the specificity of race), gathers and concretizes these same determinations, and constitutes itself as the absolute speaking subject in absolute terms. That this subject lacks the universality that apparently defines the humanitas of humanism in a received sense does not mean that Nazism is antihumanist. This subject simply inscribes humanism in the logic, of which there are many examples, of the realization and becoming concrete of abstractions.

MPP5-202 HUMANISM DISPLAYS AN IMPERIAL WILL TO POWER

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.223.

Heidegger failed to adhere to the radically dialogical imperatives of his de-structive project, and the consequences were disastrous. But this failure, however rightly open to severe criticism, should not be cause for the delegitimation of his philosophical project as such. For in thus disclosing the imperial will to power and the latent violence inhering in the "disinterested" inquiry of humanism, Heidegger established a theoretical context that enabled oppositional intellectuals faced with the problem of justifying a Marxist discourse that had become Stalinist.

MPP5-203 LIBERAL DISCOURSE AND PRACTICES LED TO VIETNAM

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.197.

What if, to be more historically specific, we read Heidegger's statement not simply in terms of a "European" problematic -- in the context of the Third Reich, the Holocaust, and the question of German national identity (the context which has come to be called the Historikerstreit) -- but also, as the American appropriation of the debate surely demands, from the immediate perspective of the Vietnamese "other": those people who suffered face to face (and continue to suffer) the dreadful consequences of the American intervention in Vietnam undertaken in the name of the "free world," which is to say, of the liberal discourse and practices of the West.

MPP5-204 THE VIETNAM WAR EXPRESSED THE LIBERAL HUMANIST VALUE SYSTEM

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.208-9.

But to restrict this violence against an absolutely demonized "other" simply to the context of military operations -- the direct and visible use of force by the state -- is misleading in a way that disables criticism. For, like the representations of American violence by the liberal humanist opponents of the war -- even those who raised the question of war crimes and genocide -- to isolate critique to the site of the overt manifestation of power is to lend such critique to the radical discrimination between the military intervention and the cultural discourse and practice accompanying it: to the rationalized conclusion that the American destruction of Vietnam and its culture was the result, not of the fulfillment of the American ideological narrative, but of the betrayal of its liberal humanist (disinterested) value system. What the actual events of this shameful period in American history disclosed more dramatically and forcefully than any other historically specific moment -- even that extended period in the nineteenth century bearing witness to the brutalities of slavery and the genocidal practices of Manifest Destiny -- is, to use an Althusserian terminology, that the cultural apparatuses, the agencies of knowledge production, were absolutely continuous with the (repressive) state apparatuses: that the American command that wasted Vietnam in trying to fulfill its restricted narrative economy was not purely a military/political command. It was, rather, a relay of commands extending from the government through the military/industrial complex to the network of technical advisory agencies (military, political, cultural, social, informational, economic, etc.), and, as the protest movement made clear in exposing the complicity of the university with these commands, especially the institutions of knowledge production.

MPP5-205 AMERICA'S INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAM DISPLAYED THE SAME LOGIC AS THE NAZIS

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.216.

Let me be as explicit as I can about this point. I am not, as the above qualification suggests, equating the American devastation of Vietnam with Nazi genocide, since, of course, the fulfillment of the genocidal logic of the American intervention was finally blocked. Nor, therefore, am I implying that Heidegger's "silence" about the extermination of the Jews can be justified by the failure of his critics to remember the genocidal momentum of the American intervention on which Sartre insists. What I am saying is that the logic, however disproportionate its manifestations, was essentially the same.

MPP5-206 THE VIETNAM WAR REVEALS THE BANKRUPTCY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.234-5.

My purpose, to put it positively, is to specify and maximize the horrors perpetrated in the name of "civilization" not simply by Nazi Germany, but by the modern West at large: the West which is, according to Heidegger, coming to its humanist end in "Europeanizing the earth" and imposing the "social order proper to" its technological/calculative essence. My purpose is to retrieve Heidegger's testimony vis-a-vis humanist modernity in the face of those such as Lacoue-Labarthe and Lyotard, whose critique of Heidegger's "silence" or "forgetfulness of the 'forgotten' (L'Oubli)," is, however justified, won at the expense of discounting these dreadful instances of "civilized" barbarism; or, as in the case of the coeditor of *Critical Inquiry*, is appropriated for the purpose of repressing the larger, essentially Heideggerian posthumanist projects of Lacoue-Labarthe and Lyotard, and for obliterating the memory of the complicity of the discourse of humanism with the American genocidal assault on Vietnam.

MPP5-207 THE DELUSION OF HUMAN OMNIPOTENCE IS DESTROYING THE EARTH

Ladelle McWhorter, Professor of Philosophy, Northeast Missouri State, *HEIDEGGER AND THE EARTH*, 1992, p.viii. Thus, this volume unfolds itself at the edge of paradox. It comprises discussions of how we as active agents might come to hold ourselves resolutely open for the occurring of non-technological, non-managerial, non-agential thought, of how it might come about that speaking, thinking, and living might occur differently, of how we might begin now to undergo the loss of our delusion of impending omnipotence and perhaps escape that delusion's nihilistic results. The conversants are not environmental experts armed with information about particular crises or the consequences of particular techniques. They are philosophers struggling to open thinking toward paths that will affirm, rather than destroy the earth.

MPP5-208 FOR HEIDEGGER, ANTHROPOCENTRISM LEADS TO TECHNOLOGICAL DOMINATION

Bill Devall and George Sessions, Professors of Philosophy, Humboldt State University and Sierra College, *DEEP ECOLOGY*, 1985, p.98.

Martin Heidegger made three contributions to the deep, long-range ecology literature. First, he provided a major critique and indictment of the development of Western philosophy since Plato. He concluded that this anthropocentric development paved the way for the technocratic mentality which espouses domination over Nature. Being, a key ontological concept for Heidegger, was constrained into narrow Christian paths or into secular, humanistic, technological philosophy in the West.

MPP5-209 FOR HEIDEGGER, HUMANISM LEADS TO THE FORGETTING OF BEING

Christopher Manes, philosopher and Deep Ecologist, 1990, *Green Rage*, p.142.

Along with biological science, the cutting edge of philosophy also turned its back on anthropocentrism. Martin Heidegger, perhaps the most influential figure in philosophy during the first half of this century, argues in *The Question Concerning Technology* and "Letter on Humanism," among other works, that modern societies preoccupation with human values and human ends since the Enlightenment is but another episode in the "forgetting" of Being in all its limitless possibilities.

MPP5-210 TO OVERCOME DESTRUCTIVENESS, ANTHROPOCENTRISM MUST BE REJECTED

George Kateb, political theorist, Princeton, *THE INNER OCEAN*, 1992, p.148-9.

At its most rigorous, Heidegger's hint is that the only person who is truly alive is one who is dead while still living - dead, that is, to what society calls life. In "dying to the world" one for the first time is able to be in the world and not in some fantastical simulacrum of it. One comes back from the dead and starts to live for the first time. One recovers. One lives as an individual, as one not wholly social. Constant awareness of one's literal mortality tinges one's sense of the inessentiality of all things. Thus cured of a driven anthropocentric purposiveness, which in the modern age is tantamount to resentment and an enraged desire to make the world over, one is withdrawn from the pervasive spirit of rapacity and hence from a blind destructiveness.

MPP5-211 FOR HEIDEGGER, HUMANISM STUNTS THE POSSIBILITIES OF BEING

Arthur Herman, Professor of History, George Mason, *THE IDEA OF DECLINE IN WESTERN HISTORY*, 1997, p.350. In 1947 Martin Heidegger, now in disgrace, wrote a furious attack on Sartre's existential humanism, charging that it was inadequate for confronting the crisis of modern man in the grip of technology and mass culture. All forms of humanism, Heidegger proclaimed, lead inevitably to metaphysics, since they presuppose a human being with a fixed rational nature. Instead of freeing man, the humanist view actually reduces Being's infinite possibilities to the dim, stunted creature of the modern age.

MPP5-212 DEMOCRACY IS IMPERIALISTIC

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.140.

Thus, for example, in "Letter on Humanism," written in 1947, Heidegger extends his ontological/epistemological genealogy of the "truth" of modernity -- the truth of disinterested inquiry -- in Being and Time to encompass its affiliative relationship to sociopolitics. In this essay, Heidegger shows that the epochal Roman translation of the Greek *aletheia* to *veritas* enabled not only the truth of the ontotheological tradition at large but also -- and contrary to its modern apologists, who trace its origins to Greek thought -- the truth of humanist modernity. In so doing, he implicates the discourse of humanism and the sociopolitical practice of modern democratic/humanist states with Rome's imperial project.

MPP5-213 LIBERAL DEMOCRACY ULTIMATELY AIMS AT DISCIPLINARY REPRESSION

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.165.

Behind this post-Enlightenment disciplinary practice, it should now be evident (even though Foucault does not overtly refer to them), lies the enabling principle and figurative corollaries of Western metaphysics: (1) the principle that identity is the condition for the possibility of difference and not the other way around; (2) the transcendental Eye (and its light) which this principle must necessarily privilege; and (3) the meta-phorics of the centered circle it precipitates to do its discreetly coercive work. This is precisely the constellation thematized by Heidegger's de-struction of the ontotheological tradition. What I am suggesting in this rereading of Foucault's *Surveiller et punir* is that Bentham's Panopticon brings to momentary fulfillment the coercive potential latent in meta-physical "oversight" and, by way of this specified excess, makes explicit (visible) the disciplinary genealogy of the "disinterested" discursive practices of modern liberal democratic (humanist) societies.

MPP5-214 WORLD DEMOCRACY IS PART OF THE NIHILISTIC PROJECT OF WESTERN TECHNOLOGY

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.247-8.

If we recall the ideologically strategic prominence of the metaphors of mapping in the American command's conduct of its imperial war against Vietnam, it will perhaps be seen that this project of retrieval underlies Heidegger's naming of the modern age "the age of the world picture" (*Die Zeit des Weltbildes*) in 1938: after he had come to realize that the essence of "science" and its totalizing representational objective could "no longer be influenced by attempts at its renewal, nor delayed in its essential transformation into pure technology [Technik]" (R 497); after, that is, he had come to see that Nazism, no less than "communism" or "world democracy," was itself caught up in the nihilistic planetary project of Western technology (R 485).

MPP5-215 THE IDEA OF "TRUTH" IS A FORM OF DOMINATION

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.148.

However generalized Heidegger's formulation, we are not far here from the poststructuralist and neo-Marxist interrogation of power relations in modernity: Foucault's analysis of the repressive hypothesis determining the practices of the disciplinary society, Gramsci's analogous analysis of capitalist hegemony, Althusser's analysis of the ideological state apparatuses, and Said's analysis of the effects of the "strong languages" of the West vis-a-vis the "weak languages" of the "Third World," all of which implicate the "truth" of the dominant discursive practices with power and domination over the threatening "other."

MPP5-216 THE IDEA OF OBJECTIVE "TRUTH" LEADS TO DOMINATION

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.224.

To put it positively, Heidegger's disclosure of the complicity between philosophy and the sociopolitical practices of domination in the West -- especially since the rise to privileged status of representational thought and the advent of the technologized and detemporalized (spatialized) modern "age of the world picture" -- enabled, if it did not itself (in its relationship to German National Socialism) carry out, an understanding of power relations in which the discourse of "truth," far from being autonomous, serves, by way of the production of knowledge, to extend and deepen the hegemony of the dominant and dominating sociopolitical order.

MPP5-217 MODERNITY EXPRESSES A WILL TO IMPERIAL DOMINATION

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.222.

Being and Time exposes the philosophy of modernity (the anthropological philosophy that has brought the ontotheological tradition to its end in what Heidegger will later call the "age of the world picture") to be despite its claims to autonomy, ontic -- and ideological -- through and through: a secondary and derivative discourse informed by the will to power over the temporality of being. The lectures on the Parmenides and the "Letter on Humanism," trace the genealogy of the "disinterested" discourse of modern humanism back to the Roman translation of the Greek *aletheia* to *veritas* and, through this translation, to Roman imperialism. And the notorious "pronouncement" of the Bremen lecture posits technology and its planetary hegemony as the essence of the mechanization of agriculture, blockades, and the manufacture of atomic bombs and the Nazis' "Final Solution." From beginning to end, as this itinerary suggests, Heidegger's project was to make explicit the violence latent in the traditional (re-presentational) understanding of truth.

MPP5-218 THE CRITICAL RETHINKING OF MODERNITY IS IMPERATIVE

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.180.

For only a critical theory that recognizes the Being represented by the Occident as a totalized construction -- an indissoluble, however asymmetrically distributed, relay of discreet repressions that is not simply Western but planetary, even galactic, in scope -- is capable of overcoming the limitations of the emancipatory discourses presently in circulation. Only such a critical theory, to be more specific, can get beyond the disabling vestigial essentialism of even the most progressive Marxist discourses, on the one hand, and the disabling vestigial disciplinarity of the various poststructuralist discourses (including Heidegger's and Foucault's) on the other. The impasse of the discourses of the left in the face of the massive Western representation of the recent epochal events in the "East" -- the sociopolitical revolutions from below -- as the definitive global triumph of "liberal democracy" bears dramatic testimony to this historically precipitated imperative to rethink the genealogy of Occidental modernity.

MPP5-219 RETHINKING MODERNITY IS ESSENTIAL

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.180.

Only a rethinking of the post-Enlightenment in terms of the decentering of the perennially privileged centered circle and its specular metaphysics, I am suggesting, can be adequate to the genealogy and critique of a modernity whose specular instruments of discreet domination are both lyrical and scientific and whose hegemonic reach is not restricted to the boundaries of the Occident but, as the rhetoric that represents the immediate contemporary occasion as the "new world order" suggests, extends throughout the planet and beyond.

MPP5-220 THE TECHNOLOGICAL DEBASEMENT OF LANGUAGE REDUCES PEOPLE TO OBJECTS

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.106.

On leveling language, in emptying it of its ontological content in the name of enlightenment, this technological "end" of Western philosophy, according to Heidegger, has also reduced thinking to representation/ calculation (*Vorstellung*). It has become a global disciplinary cybernetic instrument positively capable of "enframing" being. In its violent leveling of the difference that temporality disseminates, it has, in fact, rendered our time the "age of the world picture" (*Weltbild*). In turn, this disciplinary spatialization of time (and its "regulated-regulating" institutional agencies of global transmission) undertaken in the name of (Western) Man threatens to level physis (the emergent dynamics of being), including human being -- not only men and women in the Occident but men and women beyond its geographical circumference -- into an indifferent and thus purely docile and useful "standing reserve".

MPP5-221 THE WAY LANGUAGE STRUCTURES THE WORLD HAS POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.94-5.

On the other hand, insofar as the Heideggerian destruction of the ontotheological tradition acknowledges that language is "the house of being" which is to say that texts, as "representations," make a difference, whether for good or ill, in "worlding" the world -- it can, if pursued beyond the ontological site to which Heidegger chose by and large to delimit his investigations, be appropriated for sociopolitical analysis and criticism.

MPP5-222 APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE IS KEY TO OUR RELATIONSHIP TO BEING.

William Lovitt, Professor of German, Cal State-Sacramento, introduction to Martin Heidegger's *THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS*, 1977, p.xix.

Access to the way to which Heidegger wishes to introduce us, the way to thinking and to a free relationship with Being, lies through language. For thinking is man's according with and responding to Being, and "language is the primal dimension" in which that responsive corresponding takes place.

MPP5-223 HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM DOESN'T DISQUALIFY HIS THOUGHT

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.125.

Now that we have some measure of distance from the turbulent controversy surrounding Heidegger's National Socialist involvements, it would seem fair by way of summary to draw four conclusions: 1) To suggest that Heidegger's 1927 magnum opus *Sein und Zeit* would in some way be "disqualified" by his political misdeeds of six years hence would be to profane that "love of wisdom" that informs the spirit of all authentic philosophical inquiry.

MPP5-224 HEIDEGGER'S POLITICS DON'T DISCREDIT HIS PHILOSOPHY

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.5.

Heidegger's philosophical texts as such, from *Being and Time* to the late essays interrogating the hegemony of *Technik* (including the notorious "Rectorate Address"), resist any simple identification with historical Nazism and Nazi practices; that they exceed the essentially reactionary political purposes attributed to them by his "liberal" humanist detractors.

MPP5-225 HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPT OF NATURE WAS DISTINCT FROM THE NAZIS

Michael Zimmerman, Professor of Philosophy, Tulane, ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS, Fall 1993, p.214.

Critics have noted that, because National Socialism and Heidegger were both opponents of Marxism, they refused to explain historical events solely in terms of socioeconomic "causes," but rather in terms of something more primal. For National Socialism, however, this "primal" was non-transcendental and naturalistic: the Will to Power. For Heidegger, the primal was transcendental and nonnaturalistic: the being of entities. Of course, insofar as nature (physis) appropriates human existence as the opening for the self-manifesting of entities, Heidegger conceded that human existence is a part of "nature." But his idea of nature, and of humanity as "caring" openness which "lets things be," are radically opposed to the crude naturalism of National Socialism.

MPP5-226 HEIDEGGER'S PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE ISN'T LIBERAL OR CONSERVATIVE

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.8-9.

Whatever his personal politics, Heidegger's philosophical discourse, which neither "abandons itself to the past" nor aims at "progress," cannot be represented, as it is by his humanist critics, in the ideologically coded terms of the essentially metaphysical binary, conservative/liberal. To do so in the name of objectivity is to betray a recuperative metaphysical agenda, and also a political one.

MPP5-227 THE INDICTMENT OF HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM IS INTELLECTUALLY DISHONEST

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.2.

The publication of Victor Farias's Heidegger and Nazism in France in 1987 reopened the question concerning the relationship between Heidegger's thought and Nazi politics with the force of scandal. Farias's book contributes little that was not already known about Heidegger's personal affiliation with Nazism.' And his analytical effort to implicate Heidegger's thought at large with Nazism is characterized by a superficiality so obvious that, as Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe has observed, it betrays a certain intellectual dishonesty, a dishonesty, I would add, endemic to the future anterior perspective of anthropological inquiry. It suggests that Farias's identification of Heidegger's philosophical writing at large with an anti-Semitic fascism is the tendentious result, not so much of reading Heidegger's texts, as of an inexorably fixed moralistic point of view grounded in the self-evidently damning "facts" of Heidegger's personal adherence to the Nazi Party.

MPP5-228 THE ATTACK ON HEIDEGGER'S POLITICS IS IDEOLOGICALLY DRIVEN

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.3-4.

What has been obscured in the dramatization of this "scandal," especially by those liberal humanists in the United States who have imported the European debate into the North American intellectual milieu, is the ideology informing the attack on Heidegger's discourse enabled by Farias's publication of the "facts" of Heidegger's personal adherence to and practice in behalf of German National Socialism. Whatever its intention, this negative renarrativization of the itinerary of Heidegger's thought in terms of historical anecdote has as its ideological subtext the discrediting of Heidegger's powerful interrogation of the discourse of humanism as such. More important, it also is at some level intended to delegitimize those later, more radical, demystifications of the privileged concept of Man that Heidegger's interrogation catalyzed. I mean the "postmodern" or "poststructuralist" or, as I prefer, "posthumanist" discourses that in the last decade or so have theorized the self-destruction in the 1960s of the "benign" discursive practices of humanism in behalf of specifically emancipatory purposes, especially the self-disclosure of the contradictory will to power informing its profession of "disinterested" and "free" inquiry.

MPP5-229 HEIDEGGER'S INFLUENCE HAS BEEN PROGRESSIVE

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.16.

The recent moralist attacks on Heidegger's thought systematically forget, or repress, the influence of Heidegger's texts on contemporary oppositional criticism in the convenient but dubious name of biographical anecdote, that is, "circumstantial evidence." This is precisely why it seems to me now necessary, not to defend Heidegger, but to retrieve his destruction of the onto-theo-logical tradition, especially his disclosure of the complicity of modern humanist inquiry (anthropo-logy, the third phase of this discursive history) with sociopolitical domination: not only the critique, but also the projective impulse that, however occulted, informs his destructive hermeneutics.

MPP5-230 THE CRITIQUE OF HEIDEGGER IS IMPLICITLY AUTHORITARIAN

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.9.

Could it not be said of Heidegger's humanist critics that their monolithic indictment of his "authoritarian" ontological and sociopolitical call to follow the leader blindly constitutes an ideological strategy finally intended to obscure precisely what the sustained posthumanist interrogation of the sovereign subject has disclosed: that their invocation of "the autonomous individual," "free choice," "disinterestedness," "the rights of Man," and "Western democracy" is itself an ontological and sociopolitical ("politically correct") appeal to follow the authoritarian imperative of "a center elsewhere," a hidden essentialist imaginary?

MPP5-231 THE CRITIQUE OF HEIDEGGER IS AN ATTEMPT TO DEFEND AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.9-10.

Indeed, it could be argued that the recently renewed effort to delegitimize Heidegger's (as well as Paul de Man's) "antihumanist" discourse is implicated in the present massive multisituated effort to recuperate the authority humanism lost in the Vietnam decade, when, in the face of the overt complicity of the institutions of knowledge production (especially the university) in the conduct of the state's colonial war against the Vietnamese people, the students and a large segment of the American public refused their spontaneous consent to its discursive principles. It could be said, further, that this effort to discredit Heidegger's antihumanist discourse and that of the posthumanists it enabled allies itself with that interpretation of the events of 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe that represents them in the global terms of the Cold War narrative: the "fall of communism" or, alternatively, the "triumph of democracy." Is it not possible to read this mounting campaign to delegitimize Heidegger's interrogation of humanism as the closure at the site of ontology of the dominant culture's effort to annul the only critical discourse that, at this historical conjuncture, is capable of resisting the planetary hegemony of the United States? I mean the (neo-)imperialism that now masks itself in the language of the Pax Americana: the "end of history" and the "coming of the new world order."

MPP5-232 THE CRITIQUE OF HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM IS JUST AN AD HOMINEM

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.105.

This is not intended to apologize for Heidegger's practice in behalf of Nazism, nor for his silence in the postwar period about the extermination of the Jews. These commissions and omissions are not finally rationalizable. Rather, it is intended to counter the effort of his present humanist critics -- and the inadvertent support they have received from some quarters of the oppositional intellectual community (poststructuralists, neo-Marxists, feminists) -- to delegitimize not simply Heidegger's "anti-humanist" thought but also the posthumanist thought it has enabled by way of appealing to biographical anecdote rather than to the texts he actually wrote.

MPP5-233 HEIDEGGER'S LATER WRITINGS DISSOCIATE HIM FROM NAZISM

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.148.

In the historically specific context in which Heidegger is writing and which he is implicitly addressing -- what this disclosure concerning the origins of humanism suggests is that the Parmenides lectures and the "Letter on Humanism" constitute Heidegger's acknowledgment of the culpability of his political discourse during the rectorship, without succumbing to the judgment of his accusers. That is, they acknowledge its complicity with the dreadful practices of the Nazis, and they also constitute his decisive dissociation from the Nazis' grotesque imperial project, without, at the same time, subscribing to the compelling but dubious binary (ideo)logic (which, since Victor Farias's "revelations" in Heidegger et le nazisme, has been used against him) that radically distinguishes between the democracy of Western Europe (including the United States) and the fascism of the Third Reich.

MPP5-234 EVEN IF HEIDEGGER WAS A NAZI, HIS THOUGHT IS LIBERATING

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, *HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM*, 1993, p.149-50.

For whatever the degree to which Heidegger appropriated his philosophical thought in behalf of the ends of Nazi practice -- and I am not at all convinced that the anecdotal or circumstantial and retrospective strategy employed by his humanist detractors is adequate to the task of determining it -- the fact remains that Heidegger's philosophical texts as such insist fundamentally on precisely this dis-closure vis-a-vis the philosophical discourse of the Occident. As such, they have enabled or at least catalyzed a number of contemporary discursive practices committed to the emancipation or emergence of a variety of cultural and sociopolitical subject positions hitherto spoken for and colonized by the hegemonic discursive practices of Occidental modernity.

MPP5-235 HEIDEGGER'S POLITICAL ERRORS DON'T UNDERMINE HIS CRITIQUE

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.150.

It is true that Heidegger focused his interrogation of the dominant discourse of modernity on the most rarefied site in the indissoluble continuum of being: i.e., the ontological understood as *Technik*, the global enframing (*Gestell*) that has reduced being in all its manifestations to standing reserve (*Bestand*). It is also true that this focus blinded him to the other more "concrete" or "worldly" sites, most notably -- and it must be conceded, irresponsibly -- the site of European politics, where the Nazis perpetrated their murderous totalitarian practice. But, however consequential, this failure to de-structure his own historically specific sociopolitical occasion does not invalidate his ontological disclosure vis-a-vis the representation of being and difference or of difference in the light of Being by the Occident at large and by humanist modernity in particular. Nor, finally, does it disable a destructive hermeneutics that could interrogate the representations of those more "practical" and historically overdetermined sites, especially the sociopolitical, which Heidegger himself neglected or overlooked or misread. Indeed, such a passage from ontological to sociopolitical critique of Western modernity, despite the misguided ultranationalist twist of the rectorate period and his continuing identification of the German language with the ancient Greek, is latent in Heidegger's destructive effort, beginning with *Being and Time*, to retrieve being as historicity from Being as re-presentation.

MPP5-236 EXAGGERATING HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM HIDES THE COMPLICITY OF THE WESTERN TRADITION

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.105.

To read Heidegger's texts after the brief period of the rectorship (April 1933-February 1934) in the "light" of the accomplished enormities of the Nazis would terminate in the repression of the voice of one of the greatest thinkers in the history of Western philosophy. More important, it would constitute a tacit acknowledgment and confirmation of the Western metaphysical tradition: the tradition, according to Heidegger's essential thought, that has come to its end in the globalization of *Technik*. It would, in short, tacitly relieve the West's essential complicity in the making of the Nazi machine and the horrors it perpetrated.

MPP5-237 CRITIQUE AT ANY LEVEL IS RELEVANT TO ALL OTHERS

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.90-1.

The Heideggerian destruction retrieves the domain of knowledge as a historical and material field of forces from the disciplinary compartmentalization to which it has been subjected by the universalizing metaphysical tradition. In thus retrieving knowledge as a diachronic and, at any historically specific moment, indissoluble relay, the destruction instigates a mode of inquiry in which, wherever one situates the question whether at the site of ontology, language, psychology, history, ecology, gender, economics, culture, or politics -- one is always already addressing the other *topoi* in the kinetic field: always and necessarily discovering their affiliative relationship, however asymmetrical and temporary it may be, to the chosen site. The circle of destructive understanding thus makes explicit what the traditional compartmentalization of knowledge into disciplines, and the "advanced" deconstructive textualization of difference, tends to preclude: the historical materiality of language and the worldliness of the text.

MPP5-238 HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE HAS POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.106-7.

Understood in terms of its resonant disclosure of the imperial dynamics informing the logic of modernity ("the end of philosophy"), Heidegger's destruction comes, in fact, to bear a striking resemblance to Foucault's and Said's more "political" critical genealogies. However more abstract (ontological), his disclosure of the filial complicity between anthropological inquiry and the planetary technology/cybernetics of European modernity parallels Foucault's disclosure of the disciplinary panopticism inscribed in the structure of modern Western (humanist) societies and Said's disclosure of the will to cultural dominance inscribed in the Occidental archival discourse he calls *Orientalism*.

MPP5-239 HEIDEGGER'S LOGIC IMPLICATES ALL LEVELS OF INQUIRY FROM ONTOLOGY TO POLITICS
William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.131.

In referring to "our belated time," I do not simply mean the Occidental time that, in becoming the inclusive "age of the world picture," has self-disclosed the relay of others that its frame cannot finally contain. I also mean specifically the time that, in transforming the discourse of the sovereign self into an inclusive hegemonic and neoimperialist discourse during the Vietnam decade, self-disclosed the violence against the multiple relay of others that it would contain. That active task, the most difficult of all tasks not impossible, I submit, remains to the "Heideggerian," if not to Heidegger's, destruction. For its differentiating circular logic of repetition makes a difference, not simply at the scene of writing, but at every site on the indissoluble continuum of being from ontology (Heidegger, Gadamer) through language (Derrida, de Man) and cultural formations (Williams, Said) to gender relations (Irigaray, Spivak) and sociopolitical institutions (Foucault, Laclau and Mouffe).

MPP5-240 CRITIQUE AT ANY LEVEL IMPLICATES ALL OTHERS

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.140.

It thus becomes possible to recognize, even though Heidegger himself failed to, that wherever (and whenever) one situates destructive inquiry, whether at the site of being (ontology), of the subject, of gender, of race, relations, of the law, of nature, of cultural production, of education, of the economy, or of sociopolitical relations, one is, in some degree or other, also always already interrogating all the other constituted sites.

MPP5-241 WESTERN METAPHYSICS AND EPISTEMOLOGY ARE COMPLICIT IN COLONIALIST REPRESSION

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.151.

In the specific terms of my thematization of the political implications latent in Heidegger's destructive hermeneutics, the recognition of the temporality of being as a lateral, however unevenly developed, continuum or field of forces makes explicit the relay between the residual "humanities" and the overdetermined disciplinary technologies of Western modernity, a relay that the disciplinary compartmentalization of knowledge has made invisible. It exposes, in Edward Said's apt term, the "affiliation"" between the negative and inactive epistemological oversight, leveling, and forgetting of difference issuing from "inquiring" meta-ta-physika (from after or above temporality) and the positive and active (if largely rarefied, i.e., hegemonic) repression, territorialization, and colonization of the relay of sociopolitical "others" enabled by the super-visory panoptic machinery of the post-Enlightenment disciplinary society.

MPP5-242 HEIDEGGER'S QUESTIONING IS ESSENTIAL TO AN EFFECTIVE OPPOSITIONAL POLITICS

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.105-6.

Above all, it must not be overlooked, as both his critics as well as too many of his admirers have done, that Heidegger's ontologically situated destruction of the Western philosophical tradition, especially of the anthropologos and its modern allotrope technology, and its "devastation of language" can be -- indeed, has been transcoded -- into a profound interrogation of the Eurocentric and hegemonic/ imperial implications of the technological superstructure of modern democratic/ capitalistic societies. However limited as such by its generalized ontological focus, Heidegger's interrogation has become acutely essential to an oppositional discourse that would counter the prevailing representation of contemporary Western history in the aftermath of the "end" of the Cold War. I mean the representation that grossly mystifies the epochal events of 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe as the "fall of socialism" or, conversely, the "triumph of the principles of democracy," which projects these events narrationally as the "end of history" or, alternatively, as the advent of a "new world order" presided over by the spirit of the "free subject."

MPP5-243 HEIDEGGER OFFERS A DISCOURSE OF EMANCIPATION

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.14.

I will readily concede to his critics that Heidegger's version of the antihumanist project, especially in the period of the rectorate, contributed to the odious political purposes of historical Nazism. But his antihumanism clearly is far more complex than it is now being represented, and should not be used to justify an obfuscation his epochal positive contribution to a differential discourse of emancipation radically at odds with that privileged in and by the humanist tradition since the Enlightenment. The discourse he inaugurated, in its exposure of the contradictions inhering in the latter, is more adequate than existing oppositional discourses to the analysis and critique of the operations of contemporary power.

MPP5-244 HEIDEGGER'S THOUGHT IS EMANCIPATORY, EVEN IF HIS POLITICS WERE REACTIONARY

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.13.

To put the project of this book positively, these essays are intended to demonstrate the continuing use value of a certain Heideggerian initiative of thinking - especially the project of overcoming philosophy - for oppositional intellectuals. Despite the politically conservative bent of his antihumanist discourse, Heidegger's destructive hermeneutics remains viable - indeed, has been rendered crucial by the historical demise of classical Marxism - to the polyvalent task of emancipation in the face of the massive "reform" movement that would relegitimate not simply the discourse of humanism and its cultural institutions, but also the discreetly repressive sociopolitical order it has always served.

MPP5-245 HEIDEGGER EXPRESSES AN EMANCIPATORY IMPULSE

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.15.

To put it positively, to "leap primordially and wholly" into the circle of the Heideggerian text is not only to encounter its contradictions but also to discover an emancipatory impulse in its solicitation of the humanist representation of being (as Being) and the affiliated relay of binary metaphors this hegemonic representation has constituted, codified, and naturalized: sovereign subject/collective subject, choosing freely/following blindly, knowledge/power, and so forth.

MPP5-246 HEIDEGGER'S THOUGHT SUPPORTS THE CRITIQUE OF REPRESSIVE PRACTICES

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.17.

Heidegger's existential analytic, that is, enabled the critique of a relay of dominant cultural discourses whose metaphysical foundations were concealed in an alleged "objectivity" or a free-floating formalism. In short it made possible the disclosure of the will to power informing their recollective mode of inquiry - and their ultimate implication, however indirect, in the violent repressive sociopolitical practices of the American state.

MPP5-247 HEIDEGGER IMPLICITLY CRITICIZES THE IDEA OF FOLLOWING A LEADER

William Spanos, Professor of English, SUNY-Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.8.

Indeed, exposing the will to power informing metaphysics, Heidegger's text puts the very idea of following a leader who embodies the transcendental Word (Logos) under erasure, precisely in order to disable it and all those more insidiously determining discourses of the anthropological tradition which conceal their determinations - and their imperative to follow - behind the rhetoric of "truth" or, in Matthew Arnold's sedimented humanist formulation, the disinterested "discourse of deliverance."

MPP5-248 HEIDEGGER DOESN'T REPUDIATE FREEDOM

William Lovitt, Professor of German, Cal State-Sacramento, introduction to Martin Heidegger's THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER ESSAYS, 1977, p.xiii.

Heidegger is not a "determinist." He does not believe that man's actions are completely controlled by forces outside him or that man has no effective freedom. To Heidegger man's life does indeed lie under a destining sent from out of Being. But to him that destining can itself call forth a self-orienting response of man that is real and is a true express on of human freedom.

MPP5-249 HUMAN FREEDOM REQUIRES THE REJECTION OF SELF-AGGRANDIZING SUBJECTIVISM

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, TIMELY MEDITATIONS, 1995, p.186.

Zimmerman hedges his praise of Heidegger's ecological credentials at this point, citing the above passage as indication that Heidegger "overestimated our importance" compared to that of the rest of nature. But Zimmerman overlooks Heidegger's earlier statement that humankind's fundamental questioning is "far removed from any noisy self-importance concerning the life of one's own soul or that of others" (MFL 16-17). Moreover, Heidegger was clear that giving ontological priority to human being in no way suggests that the natural world, or the material world at large, exists (solely) for our benefit. Indeed, disclosive freedom appears only in the absence of the possessive mastery that underlies such an assumption. Human being is the highest being (as opposed to the most powerful being) only to the extent that human being gains release from all self-aggrandizing subjectivism. If there is any claim to greatness in our being, it arises not from the human capacity to dominate and exploit but from the unique human capacity to dwell and disclose in a way that preserves.

MPP5-250 HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE OF HUMANIST DISCOURSE IS EMANCIPATORY

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.82.

I want to suggest by way of a disclosive remembering that the Heideggerian destruction, whatever Heidegger's specific socio-political application, is inherently more adequate than deconstruction to the radical emancipatory task of contemporary oppositional intellectuals: not simply to the defense of the discourse of difference against the charge of nihilistic relativism made by its traditional humanistic critics, but to the effective critique of the metaphysical binary logic of mastery -- "culture or anarchy" as Matthew Arnold codified it -- that informs the humanistic discourse and the cultural and sociopolitical institutions it reproduces.

MPP5-251 HEIDEGGERIAN CRITIQUE IS PROFOUNDLY EMANCIPATORY

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.95.

Substantial as the limitations of Heidegger's own practice are, they do not preclude the possibility of appropriating a salient motif of his destructive hermeneutics that takes his thought in a more worldly (and contemporary), if not radically different, direction from that pursued by Derrida and his followers. The direction I am projecting, to be specific, does not lead simply to a generalized disclosure of the "structurality of structure," or alternatively of the "textuality" of "writing in general" ending in, as Barbara Johnson puts it, the "radicality" of deconstruction, the accompanying "surprise" of ignorance: "What the surprise of encounter with otherness should do is lay bare some hint of an ignorance one never knew one had." It also leads to a textual criticism that is sociopolitically emancipatory: in Foucault's terms, to a critical "history of the present."

MPP5-252 HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE IS POLITICALLY LIBERATING

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.107.

However unrealized in Heidegger's practice, the destruction or disclosure of the metaphysical, or specifically, the anthropological circle is informed by the theoretical imperative to activate an opening of the horizon of understanding -- in Gadamer's terms, of understanding to horizontality, to include the "worldliness" of the world: the indissoluble relationality of the sites of being. It is essentially informed by the imperative to liberate the awareness or the remembrance that the prison house of the logocentric archive exists to confine and subdue not only at the site of philosophy (metaphysical thought *per se*), but, because language is the house of being, all along its indissoluble continuum from language through culture to sociopolitics.

MPP5-253 IN ITS EFFECT, HEIDEGGER'S DISCOURSE HAS BEEN EMANCIPATORY

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.251.

Whatever the viability of this possibility, which I am sure will strike Heidegger's humanist critics as outrageous, there is, despite the blinded compromises of Heidegger's discursive practices of the rectorate and the vestigial metaphysics of his thought at large, the fact of his influence on an essentially emancipatory contemporary (post-Vietnam) discourse that in turn has validated and energized the resistance of a multiplicity of historically specific constituencies of the human community, constituencies hitherto spoken for, marginalized, repressed, excluded, or, most insidiously of all, accommodated by the dominant Occidental (anthropological/technological/(neo-)imperial) sociopolitical order. As such a contradiction, it bears witness not simply against the humanist prosecutors' judgment of Heidegger's thought, but against the humanist "repressive hypothesis": the very idea of Truth that his humanist accusers have relied on to prosecute their "case" against Heidegger.

MPP5-254 HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE PERMITS THE DEFUSING OF DISCIPLINARY POWER

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.118.

In retrieving the differential be-ing of being from the metaphysical tradition, the destruction also retrieves the idea of language as words -- as, that is, a temporal deferring/differentiating medium -- from what Kierkegaard, in his *Auseinandersetzung* with Hegel, calls the re-collective tradition of the archival Word. Which is to say, with Nietzsche, from the prison house of metaphysical discourse. Thus destroyed, this problematic metaphorical phrase -- language as "the house of being" -- discloses a function of textual interpretation quite different from what both his followers and critics attribute to Heidegger. On the one hand, it activates the possibility of exposing and defusing the panoptic power and authority not simply of metaphysical discourse at large, but also, as I will show more fully in the next chapter, the affiliated semiotic elaborations of what I will call provisionally a "Roman" civil and political society grounded in the geo-metry of a logocentric measure. I mean precisely those "disciplinary" and "imperial" cultural and sociopolitical formations that are the objects of the critical genealogy of Foucault or Said, among others. On the other hand, it retrieves the possibility of a postmodern or, more specifically posthumanist discourse the measure of which is the measure of *Gelassenheit*, a measure that, at home in the not-at-home (*unheimliche Welt*), lets the endless be-ing of being be.

MPP5-255 HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE IS NOT NIHILISTIC

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.107.

The destruction is not, therefore, a nihilistic activity of thought, whether that of metaphysics or a certain deconstruction, that neutralizes its active emancipatory force by leveling difference to one or another form of identity. Rather, it is paradoxically a positive or pro-jective interpretive activity in which thinking (*theoria*) is doing-in-the-world (*praxis*). It is a "self"-activity or *praxis* that always already destroys the reified determinations (the re-presentations) inscribed in the subject by metaphysics (and its linguistic, cultural, and political elaborations) and simultaneously discloses the understanding's radical and multisituated temporality. If *Dasein* as being-in-the-world is inscribed -- is never "presuppositionless," as Heidegger everywhere acknowledges -- it is also *ek-static*: temporality is, as it were, always already an absent cause.

MPP5-256 HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE ISN'T SIMPLY NEGATIVE OR RELATIVISTIC

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.107-8.

The measure of Heidegger's "proper self" (Eigentlichkeit) is not the measure of full presence, but of its own (historical) occasion. The disclosure of the "origins of the fundamental ontological concepts," we should recall, "has nothing to do with a pernicious relativizing of ontological standpoints. The destruction has just as little the negative sense of disburdening ourselves of the ontological tradition. On the contrary, it should stake out the positive possibilities of the tradition. Negatively, the destruction is not even related to the past: its criticism concerns 'today' and the dominant way we read the history of ontology, whether it is conceived as the history of opinions, ideas, or problems. However, the destruction does not wish to bury the past in nullity; it has a positive intent. Its negative function remains tacit and indirect."

MPP5-257 THE CRITIQUE OF HEIDEGGER IS A POLITICAL MOVE DESIGNED TO DISCREDIT OPPOSITIONAL DISCOURSE

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.184.

As is well known, Heidegger's interrogation of metaphysics, of the anthropo-logos of modern Occidental Man, especially in Being and Time but also in all that follows the so-called turn (Kehre), has served as the catalyst, if not precisely the origin, of the oppositional discourse that has come to be called (pejoratively) "theory." Given this inextricable affiliation between Heidegger's thought and contemporary theory, the ideological agenda informing the "opening" of the debate by the editors of Critical Inquiry must also be seen as a significant instance of the mounting initiative of an embattled humanist establishment (ironically unthought, it would seem, by the European contributors to the symposium) to discredit what has variously (and misleadingly) been referred to as the discourse of "postmodernism" or "poststructuralism," but which I prefer to call "posthumanism." I mean the discourse that at this historically specific conjuncture (since the 1960s) threatens not only the hegemony of the discourse of humanism, but also of the disciplinary and neoimperial society at large: the "liberal" or bourgeois / late capitalist democracies this discourse was invented to legitimate and reproduce.

MPP5-258 THE CRITIQUE OF HEIDEGGER FORGETS THE BARBARITIES OF HUMANISM

William Spanos, Professor of English, State University of New York, Binghamton, HEIDEGGER AND CRITICISM, 1993, p.195.

Which is to say that Davidson's teleologically determined -- and morally outraged -- argument against Heidegger's de-humanized and dehumanizing philosophy compels him to misrepresent the historically specific reality of the manufacture of bombs, hydrogen or otherwise. In the name of a correctable possibility, it not only forgets that the so-called Western Allies ("so-called," because the alliance with the Soviet Union was a matter of convenience) perpetrated the unspeakable incendiary bombing of Dresden (an open city) on February 13 and 14 (in the last days of the war when nothing -- except the fear of Soviet dominance -- was strategically at stake), which in 24 hours extinguished by fire the lives of 135,000 women, children, and men. It also forgets that the government of the United States, with the backing of most of its scientist and humanist advisors (I think, for example, of the role played by James Bryant Conant, president of Harvard University, in the making of this decision), exploded the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, which immediately incinerated 100,000 human beings in Hiroshima, and 75,000 in Nagasaki, in two cataclysmic moments, and rendered the daily lives of those who survived and the future generation they carried in their bodies at the same time an experience of horror.

MPP5-259 HEIDEGGER'S VIEW OF AUTHENTICITY IS NIHILISTIC

Stanley Rosen, Penn State philosopher, NIHILISM, 1969, p.100. For these reasons it would be a contradiction in terms if Heidegger were to give a positive, "doctrinal" content to his analysis of the existential process of authenticity. Heidegger's silence in this respect is consistent, but it also reveals the necessarily nihilistic implications of his thought. Put bluntly, no one can say anything to anyone about what constitutes genuine choice in a specific situation. It therefore becomes impossible to prevent total suspension of judgment. The Christian may say, "judge not, lest ye be judged," because of the eternal presence of an eternal judge. But the Heideggerian becomes indistinguishable from the nihilist, who says that "everything is allowed," because part of the Christian doctrine has been wedded to a resolute self-reliance in the absence of all gods.

MPP5-260 HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPT OF AUTHENTICITY PRODUCES BRUTALITY

Walter Kaufmann, Princeton philosopher, *DISCOVERING THE MIND: NIETZSCHE, HEIDEGGER, AND BUBER*, 1980, p.201.

The whole account of inauthenticity is a mere foil for authenticity, and that does not have three characteristics but only one: resoluteness. Thus the fundamental contrast is between indecisive ambiguity and chatter on one side and resoluteness on the other. Heidegger's definition of resoluteness is emphasized in print: "this taciturn self-projection, ready for dread, into one's most authentic being guilty—is what we call resoluteness." Kierkegaard's critics, I among them, have never been satisfied that he succeeded in *Fear and Trembling* in establishing sufficient safeguards against inhumane and brutal commitments. Heidegger's reliance on the same old Kierkegaardian notions of silence, readiness for dread, and guilt suggests, and closer examination bears out, that he was unable to improve on Kierkegaard.

MPP5-261 HEIDEGGER'S ANALYSIS OF AUTHENTICITY IS FLAWED

Walter Kaufmann, Princeton philosopher, *DISCOVERING THE MIND: NIETZSCHE, HEIDEGGER, AND BUBER*, 1980, p.197-8.

Heidegger's analysis of authenticity and inauthenticity is shallow and Manichaeic. The shallowness is due in no small measure to the Manichaeism. He denied repeatedly that his contrast of these two modes of Being had anything at all to do with moralizing and insisted that his descriptions were value-free; but this may well be the most incredible claim in the whole book. His account of inauthenticity is extremely sarcastic, while authenticity is romanticized.

MPP5-262 HEIDEGGER'S ACCEPTANCE OF NAZISM WAS EXPRESSIVE OF HIS IDEA OF AUTHENTICITY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.34-5.

The conclusion to be drawn from what we might define as the "existential imperative" of Being and Time—from the fact that its ontological categories necessitate ontic realization—is of great moment for an understanding of Heidegger's own political experiences; It suggests the possibility that Heidegger intended his political involvements of the 1930s as the existential consummation of the categorical framework of his 1927 book; more specifically, that the philosopher viewed his entry into the Nazi Party as a concrete, historical manifestation of authentic, resolute existence. This conclusion, already suggested in the remarks by Karl Lowith cited above, is forcefully borne out by Heidegger's numerous political writings and speeches, in which he has gone to no small lengths to articulate his support for National Socialism in categories explicitly gleaned from the existential analytic of his 1927 work.

MPP5-263 HEIDEGGER'S VIEW OF CHOICE IS NORMATIVELY IMPOVERISHED

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.52-3.

For what might be described as the nonnative impoverishment of the Heideggerian category of "resolve" or "decisiveness" goes far toward explaining the failings of decisionism in all its forms. For when it is devoid of any and every normative orientation, "decision" can only be blind and uninformed—ultimately, it becomes a leap into the void. Without any material criteria for decision, it becomes impossible to distinguish an authentic from an inauthentic decision, responsible from irresponsible action—let alone on what grounds an individual would even prefer one course of action to another. Indeed, at times, Heidegger seems to openly glorify the irrationalist bases of decision; for example, when he observes: "Every decision bases itself on something not mastered, something concealed, confusing; else it would never be a decision."

MPP5-264 TECHNOLOGICAL DOMINATION IS DUE TO A DEARTH OF REASON

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.167.

Heidegger's theory of technology ultimately collapses under the weight of its own self-imposed conceptual limitations. And thus, the intrinsic shortcomings of his theoretical framework prevent him from entertaining the prospect that the problem of technological domination owes more to the dearth of reason in the modern world rather than an excess. For in modern life, the parameters of rationality have been prematurely restricted: formal or instrumental reason has attained de facto hegemony; practical reason—reflection on ends—has been effectively marginalized. Instead of the "overcoming" of reason recommended by Heidegger, what is needed is an expansion of reason's boundaries, such that the autonomous logic of instrumental rationality is subordinated to a rational reflection on ends.

MPP5-265 HEIDEGGER MORAL OBTUSENESS UNDERMINES CRITIQUE OF TECHNOLOGY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.168.

The ultimate proof of the bankruptcy of Heidegger's later thought--including the critique of technology that represents an integral moment thereof--may well be contained in a relatively obscure remark from his 1949 lecture series, "Insight into That Which Is." For it is this observation that perhaps best reveals the "leveling" tendencies inherent in his theory of the "destiny of Being," his incapacity for making rational sociohistorical judgments, as well as his insensitivity to the suffering of the victims of Nazism. According to Heidegger: Agriculture is today a motorized food industry, in essence the same as the manufacture of corpses in gas chambers and extermination camps, the same as the blockade and starvation of countries, the same as the manufacture of atomic bombs. That Heidegger can in good conscience equate mechanized agriculture with the genocidal politics of the Nazis is not only a monumental non sequitur in historical reasoning; it suggests a fundamental incapacity for both moral and theoretical discernment. It is at this point that his thought fully regresses behind the standards of the healthy human understanding that he treated with unrelenting condescension throughout his life. This judgment, far from representing a momentary lapse, is wholly consistent with the "leveling gaze" of the theory of *Seinsgeschichte* in general, viz., its endemic propensity for equating incomparables. Ironically, here we see metaphysics at its purest: a theoretically conditioned insensitivity to the concrete specificity of the phenomena of contemporary historical life. Above all, Heidegger's observation proves shocking insofar as it signifies a calculated regression behind the received standards of twentieth-century morality, which have been "indexed" in relation to the unspeakable crimes of the Holocaust.

MPP5-266 HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE OF TECHNOLOGY SUPPORTS THE SUPERIORITY OF NAZISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.144-5.

The attempt to explain the essence of National Socialism as an outcome of *Seinsgeschichte*, therefore, must be traced back to the afore mentioned strategy of denial. For by virtue of this strategy, Heidegger perversely succeeds in rendering the failings of other nations "equiprimordial" with the misdeeds of Nazism. For be they communist, democratic, or fascist, they, too, have equally succumbed to the afflictions of "technological nihilism" and the "forgetting of Being." As such, nonfascist regimes constitute no "essential" improvement over National Socialism - which, by virtue of its "confrontation between global technology and modern man," at least had the merit of staging a heroic struggle against nihilism. According to this contorted, Heideggerian vision of *Heilsgeschichte* (the history of salvation), Nazism's failure symbolizes the tragedy of modern humanity in general in its struggle with the realities of technological nihilism. In the end, the philosopher of Being leaves us with a perverse nostalgia for an essentialized version of Nazism - our century's last chance in the long struggle against nihilism.

MPP5-267 HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE OF TECHNOLOGY RESULTS IN ULTIMATE PASSIVITY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.142.

Even the critique of technology for which Heidegger's later work has become known remains essentially unserviceable for the ends of human emancipation. Instead, it proves a prescription for human inaction and passivity: in light of our fate of total *Seinsverlassenheit*, all we can do is await the "god" who will "save us" and initiate the "other beginning."

MPP5-268 HEIDEGGER TRIES TO BLAME TECHNOLOGY FOR THE SINS OF NAZI GERMANY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.141.

Moreover, the attempt to redeem the later Heidegger at the expense of the early Heidegger runs the risk of playing into the philosopher's own complex strategy of intellectual subterfuge in the postwar period. And in this regard it is important to realize the paramount role played by the theory of *Seinsgeschichte* in Heidegger's own psychology of denial. For doesn't this doctrine - which instructs that all occurrences in the world of human affairs have their ultimate source in the activities of an unnameable, higher power - conveniently serve to deny all individual and collective historical responsibility? If it is true, as Heidegger claims in "Überwindung der Metaphysik," that it is Western metaphysics and the technological nihilism it promotes (*das Gestell*) that is responsible for the events of contemporary history, then what sense would it make to hold the German people accountable for the untold destruction of the Second World War - for millions of civilian deaths, the enslavement of entire peoples, and, to be sure, the Holocaust? If "error," which Heidegger ontologically ennobles as "Irrnis," is in truth produced by the unpredictable "seedings" of Being, then one would be foolish to await a word of contrition from the philosopher himself. For the flipside of Heidegger's later abandonment of a "philosophy of the subject" is a renunciation of the category of personal responsibility in toto. Thus, Heidegger's own "error" has also been "sent" by Being.

MPP5-269 HEIDEGGER'S PERSPECTIVE OFFERS NO GROUNDS FOR OPPOSING THE HOLOCAUST

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.170.

Indeed, technophobia, followed to its logical and crudely primitivistic conclusions, finally devolves into a dark reactionism - and a paralyzing quietism. For if our confrontation with civilization turns on passivity before a 'disclosing of Being', a mere 'dwelling' on the earth, and a letting things be', to use Heidegger's verbiage - much of which has slipped into deep ecology's vocabulary as well - the choice between supporting barbarism and enlightened humanism has no ethical foundations to sustain it. Freed of values grounded in objectivity, we are lost in a quasinreligious antihumanism, a spirituality that can with the same equanimity hear the cry of a bird and ignore the anguish of six million once-living people who were put to death by the National Socialist state.

MPP5-270 HEIDEGGER USED HIS CRITIQUE OF TECHNOLOGY TO RATIONALIZE THE HOLOCAUST
Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY, 1995, p.170.

Considering the time, the place, and the abstract way in which Heidegger treated humanity's 'Fall' into technological 'inauthenticity' - a 'Fall' that he, like Ellul, regarded as inevitable, albeit a metaphysical, nightmare - it is not hard to see why he could trivialize the Holocaust, when he deigned to notice it at all, as part of a techno-industrial 'condition'. 'Agriculture is now a motorized (motorisierte) food industry, in essence the same as the manufacturing of corpses in the gas chambers and extermination camps,' he coldly observed, 'the same as the blockade and starvation of the countryside, the same as the production of the hydrogen bombs.' In placing the industrial means by which many Jews were killed before the ideological ends that guided their Nazi exterminators, Heidegger essentially displaces the barbarism of a specific state apparatus, of which he was a part, by the technical proficiency he can attribute to the world at large! These immensely revealing offhanded remarks, drawn from a speech he gave in Bremen in 1949, are beneath contempt. But they point to a way of thinking that gave an autonomy to technique that has fearful moral consequences which we are living with these days in the name of the sacred, a phraseology, that Heidegger would find very congenial were he alive today.

MPP5-271 HEIDEGGER REINFORCES TECHNOLOGICAL DOMINATION

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE POLITICS OF BEING, 1990, p.165-6.
Since the doctrine of the history of Being has already banished all categories of practical reason from its theoretical purview, we are left with two complementary extremes that combine to produce the image of a totally reified world from which there can be no escape--for, strictly speaking, there are no "social actors" left to alter its course. On the one hand, there is the implacable advance of technology itself, which "can never be stopped"; on the other hand, there is a wholesale devaluation of the possibilities for human action, which has the performative consequence of encouraging a total submission to fate. In the last analysis, Heidegger's theory ends up reinforcing the logic of technological domination it claims to oppose: technology is ontologized as the modern condition humaine, and our historical capacities for resisting or reshaping this fate are written off a priori as merely a further expression of the nefarious and omnipresent "will to will."

MPP5-272 HEIDEGGER PHILOSOPHY IS STERILE BECAUSE IT BYPASSES SCIENCE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE POLITICS OF BEING, 1990, p.123.
But as Lowith has observed: Philosophical reflection on the whole of what exists in nature, which is the world . . . cannot merely "pass science by" without falling into the void. It is easily said, and it would be a relief, if philosophical thought were to dwell beyond what is provable and refutable; if, however, the realm of "essential thinking" were to surpass all proof and refutation, then philosophy would have to do neither with truth nor with probability, but rather with uncontrollable claims and allegations.

MPP5-273 EMPHASIS ON RELEASEMENT RESULTS IN ULTIMATE PASSIVITY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE POLITICS OF BEING, 1990, p.147.

As we suggested earlier, the essential thinking of the later Heidegger promotes an "eclipse of practical reason." For his post-Kehre reformulation of the relation between Being and Dasein rebels so fervently against the voluntarist dimension of his own earlier thinking that the very concept of "meaningful human action" is seemingly rendered null and void. If the early Heidegger attempted to rally Dasein to "decisiveness" (Entschlossenheit), the thought of the later Heidegger appears at times to be a summary justification of human passivity and inaction (Gelassenheit) - so prejudicially is the balance between Sein and Mensch struck in favor of the former term. Thus, in the later Heidegger, the campaign against practical reason develops along a two-fold front: not only is the concept of Being grossly inflated, but the powers of human reason and will are correspondingly devalued.

MPP5-274 HEIDEGGER CULTIVATES DEBILITATING PASSIVITY

Alan Megill, University of Iowa, PROPHETS OF EXTREMITY, 1985, p.180.

Heidegger inculcates a quietism. This quietism is dangerous: those who think that the forces of technology lie utterly beyond human control are likely to find that this is in fact the case; those who believe that only a god can save them will likely need such salvation.

MPP5-275 HEIDEGGER'S RADICAL PASSIVITY LEADS TO POLITICAL IMPOTENCE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE POLITICS OF BEING, 1990, p.194-5.

This conviction leads in Heidegger to a radical passivity, to the notion that we ought to let beings be. Heidegger's position has political implications, though it denies its own political nature, for it amounts to nothing less than an acceptance--indeed, a confirmation -- of the existing social and political order.

MPP5-276 "LETTING BE" ENSURES SOCIAL STAGNATION

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY, 1995, p.169.

Basically, this interpretation of a technological interrelationship reflects a regression - socially and psychologically as well as metaphysically - into quietism. Heidegger advances a message of passivity or passivity conceived as a human activity, an endeavor to let things be and 'disclose' themselves.

MPP5-277 HEIDEGGER FAILED TO "LET THINGS BE"

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY, 1995, p.169-70.

'Letting things be' would be little more than a trite Taoist and Buddhist precept were it not that Heidegger as a National Socialist became all too ideologically engaged, rather than 'letting things be', when he was busily undoing 'intellectualism,' democracy, and technological intervention into the 'world'.

MPP5-278 RELEASEMENT ALWAYS ALSO ENTAILS CONCEALMENT

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.119.

"Freedom for what is opened up in an open region lets beings be the beings they are. Freedom now reveals itself as letting beings be," observes Heidegger, in an initial formulation of his later philosophical doctrine of *Gelassenheit* or "releasement." This greater philosophical willingness (a type of philosophical *Ent-schlossenheit* or "un-closedness") to "let beings be the beings they are" presumably yields greater fidelity to the "Being of beings" as such. It thus represents a first significant step toward a solution to the *Seinsfrage*; whereas in the case of philosophical thought from Plato onward, the Being of beings was essentially covered up or concealed by the distortional influence of various philosophical "first principles": the "idea," the "cogito," "substance," "monad," "the transcendental subject," "spirit," etc. However (and what follows constitutes a crucial admission by Heidegger), insofar as letting beings be always lets beings be in a specific way - that is, because letting be is itself always perspectival or selective - its very manner or disclosing beings also conceals them. Thus, every act of unconcealment is simultaneously an act of concealment. Or as Heidegger himself expresses this thought: "Precisely because letting be always lets beings be in a particular comportment which relates to them and thus discloses them, it conceals beings as a whole."

MPP5-279 IT'S NECESSARY TO GO BEYOND HEIDEGGER'S "LETTING BE"

George Kateb, political theorist, Princeton, *THE INNER OCEAN*, 1992, p.149.

For nuclear readers of Heidegger, letting things be is only auxiliary to becoming protectively attached to existence as such. An enlarged receptivity that is not merely passive attaches us to many more particulars than we customarily notice, and we may rejoice in what we allow ourselves to take in, in a poetically active receptivity. Yet, whatever Nietzsche or Heidegger may say, the horror and the obscenity crowd in again and shove themselves forward; their existence cannot be denied or made glamorous. Existence is not confined to the beautiful. Condemnatory judgments will inevitably be made. Feelings of disgust and horror must shake the soul. But just because the earth is inessential, contingent, not necessary, just because there could have been earthly nothingness - to leave aside the philosophically disputable idea of literal universal nothingness - one must finally attach oneself to earthly existence as it is, whatever it is, and act to preserve it, not just because of its beauty and in spite of its suffering and wickedness, just as we are not allowed to jeopardize it for the sake of any value or purpose that arises within it.

MPP5-280 HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM STEMS FROM HIS CRITIQUE OF RATIONALISM

Allan Bloom, Professor of Philosophy, University of Chicago, *THE CLOSING OF THE AMERICAN MIND*, 1987, p.311.

Thus it was no accident that Heidegger came forward just after Hitler's accession to power to address the university community in Freiburg as the new rector, and urged commitment to National Socialism. His argument was not without subtlety and its own special kind of irony, but in sum the decision to devote wholeheartedly the life of the mind to an emerging revelation of being, incarnated in a mass movement, was what Heidegger encouraged. That he did so was not a result of his political innocence but a corollary of his critique of rationalism.

MPP5-281 HEIDEGGER WAS INFATUATED WITH IRRATIONALITY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.43-4.

The peculiar aversion of the call to discursive articulation thus seems to indicate little more than a willful obscurantism on Heidegger's part. That Heidegger seeks to make a virtue out of the call's incommunicability, that he goes out of his way to laud its "conspicuous indefiniteness," suggests a deliberate infatuation with the forces of unreason. Whereas the ethos of modernity makes a virtue out of insights that can be linguistically redeemed, and thereby subjected to the approval of the senses communis, Heidegger disappoints us by dogmatically regressing behind the terms of this program. In fundamental ontology, the idea of the senses communis is flatly degraded to the "publicness" of the "They"-- in Heideggerian parlance, a term of derision from which no conceivable good can emerge. In his thought, the metaphor of the "light of reason" has no place. We are once more provided with evidence for Tugendhat's claim concerning the predominantly "nonargumentative and evocative" character of Heideggerian discourse.

MPP5-282 HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM SHOWS THE DANGERS OF POLITICAL IRRATIONALISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.106.

However, another undeniable factor in Heidegger's enthusiasm for the movement was his personal attraction to Hitler as an archetypal embodiment of charismatic leadership. In this connection, the following exchange between Heidegger and Karl Jaspers in June 1933 may be of more than merely anecdotal import. To the latter's query, "How could you think that a man as uncultivated as Hitler can govern Germany?" Heidegger responds: "It's not a question of culture. Take a look at his wonderful hands!" When understood within the framework of *Seinspolitik*, the meaning of this claim is clear: existential qualifications are more important than intellectual ones. It would be unfair to overburden with theoretical significance an offhand conversational remark made by Heidegger. But in a far from trivial sense, Heidegger's response is superbly illustrative concerning the pitfalls involved in employing "irrationalist," existential criteria in the formulation of political judgments.

MPP5-283 THE CRITIQUE OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT LED TO THE NAZI DEBACLE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.152.

This verdict gives cause for dismay, for it suggests that the philosopher has drawn precisely the wrong conclusions - from the political events of 1933-1945: instead of participating in the attempt to forge, out of the ravages of postwar Europe, a new conception of reason and truth, Heidegger himself has become an even greater "stiff-necked" advocate of counter-enlightenment. His thought seeks refuge in the recrudescence of myth: "openness for the mystery," "the remembrance of Being," and "the mirror-play of the four-fold" (gods and mortals, heaven and earth) becomes the mystified categorial scheme around which his later thinking revolves. The notion that analogous counter-enlightenment attitudes and doctrines might have played a key role in the spiritual preparation for the German catastrophe is a thought that has obviously never crossed his mind.

MPP5-284 HEIDEGGER'S ANTI-HUMANISM IS MISGUIDED AND IRRESPONSIBLE

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.7.

Whatever its chronology, the use of "humanism" to mean a crude anthropocentric and technocratic use of the planet in strictly human interests (often socially unspecified) has its contemporary origins in Martin Heidegger's *Brief über den Humanismus* (Letter on Humanism), written in 1947, which gained favor among the postwar French philosophes of the existentialist and later postmodernist vintage. Heidegger's very flawed and sinister *Brief* is a masterpiece of misinterpretation and irresponsible reasoning.

MPP5-285 IT WAS ONLY HEIDEGGER'S RESIDUAL HUMANISM THAT KEPT HIM FROM BEING A COMPLETE NAZI

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.141.

But this interpretation of Heidegger's "error" goes awry on an essential point: it is undoubtedly the case that Heidegger's residual reliance on the tradition of Western metaphysics, instead of abetting his allegiances to the National Awakening of 1933, prevented him from identifying tout court with the genocidal imperialism of National Socialism - for example, with aspects of Nazi doctrine such as "racial thinking." Thus, even at those precarious moments of the Rectoral Address where Heidegger is tempted to fully merge his thought with National Socialist ideology, it is his fidelity to the legacy of Western humanism - here, the category of "the Greek beginning" - that prevents him from losing touch with the authentic impulses of his early philosophy.

MPP5-286 HEIDEGGER'S VIEW OF HUMANISM IS OVERLY NARROW AND TECHNOCRATIC

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.10.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, both forms of humanism - the Renaissance and the Enlightenment - melded into what I shall call an 'enlightened humanism' that united Renaissance aestheticism with Enlightenment rationalism, an outlook that pervaded the thinking of most socialists. The formidable prestige of enlightened humanism remained triumphant for a century, despite the assaults that were directed against it by mystics, romantics, and nationalists, all of whose ideas converged in the proto-fascistic *volkisch* movement of the fin de siècle. In the postwar era it is due in no small part to Martin Heidegger's anti-Enlightenment and anti-rational tract, 'A Letter on Humanism' (1947) that the word 'humanism' has acquired its present-day pejorative meaning as an amoral, narrowly anthropocentric and ugly technocratic outlook.

MPP5-287 HEIDEGGER NAZISM INTIMATELY RELATED TO REJECTING OF UNIVERSALISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.106.

Heidegger will express a similar thought five months later, this time in a public context, when, in view of the upcoming plebiscite called by Hitler (ex post facto) on Germany's withdrawal from the League of Nations, he implores his student audience: "Let not doctrines and 'ideas' be the rules of your Being. The Führer alone is the present and future German reality and its law." According to Heidegger's logic, the greatness of the National Socialist movement is ultimately irreducible to a given set of intellectual precepts or "ideas." It is not so much "ideological," but existential, rooted in the authenticity of the Führer as an individual, historically existent *Dasein*. In this sense, Heidegger would have undoubtedly seconded Carl Schmitt's proclamation that "On this day [January 30, 1933] one can say that 'Hegel died' "--viz., the idea of the German *Rechtsstaat* as an entity based on universal principles and norms.

MPP5-288 AUTHENTIC HUMANISM IS CONSISTENT WITH HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.97.

Authentic humanism, however, is characterized by the idea that "there is at least one creature in whom existence precedes essence, a creature that exists before being definable, and that this creature is man ... if man as existentialism conceives of him is not definable, that is because he is at first nothing." It is apropos to note that in the name of this humanism Sartre can denounce sexism as an ideology that reduces the woman's humanity to purely natural determinations, and Marxist sociology as one that reduces the human being to purely historical determinations. Jean Beaufret has noted that this existential critique conforms not only to the tradition of Husserl's phenomenology but also Heidegger's when, repeating Sartre's theses in *Introduction aux Philosophies de l'existence*, he says: "Can there be dignity without freedom?"

MPP5-289 HUMANISM IS NEEDED TO CRITICIZE NAZI RACISM

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.107-8.

More generally, it is very much in the name of humanism thus understood, in the name of that strictly human capacity to wrench oneself free of natural determinations, that a criticism of the racist imagination (in the Lacanian sense) is possible. When, however, Heidegger makes the destiny of Being the destiny of man, when he thus returns to the antihumanist idea of a traditional code (if only that of the history of Being), he founders in inauthenticity, and his fall makes possible the return of the nationalistic myth and the fanatical hatred of modernity.

MPP5-290 HEIDEGGER DIDN'T EMBRACE NAZISM BECAUSE HE WAS TOO HUMANISTIC

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.41-2.

Who can now be persuaded that it is because Heidegger was then too "humanistic" that he wrote disparagingly of the relations between a colleague and friend of his and the "Jew Frankel," judged that for the university the revolution involves an effort to "rethink traditional science from the strengths and demands of National Socialism," and called on his students not to "drown" their "hard struggle" in "Christian and humanistic notions"?

MPP5-291 HEIDEGGER'S REJECTION OF HUMANISM IS TOO SIMPLISTIC

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.87-8.

From this viewpoint, it is first of all clear, as we have noted, that this criticism of technology as the global concretization of an idea of man as consciousness and will implies, like it or not, a deconstruction of democratic reason and hence, in some sense, of humanism. It is also clear, however, that Heidegger's thinking, even fixed up this way, continues in some odd way to misfire because of its one-dimensionality. Just as, on the strictly philosophical level, it leads to lumping the various facets of modern subjectivity together in a shapeless mass and to judging that the progression from Descartes to Kant to Nietzsche is linear and in fact inevitable; just as, on the political level, it leads to the brutal inclusion of American liberalism in the same category with Stalinist totalitarianism.

MPP5-292 HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM DIDN'T REFLECT HUMANISM

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.107.

Whatever is true of this debate, which, it will be readily agreed, here remains open, one thing is still certain. Heidegger is not close to Nazism because he remained a prisoner of humanism, nor because of his deliberations about authenticity and the distinguishing property of man. For Heidegger, the distinguishing property of man is always transcendence, and on the contrary it was in the name of this transcendence and thus because he was still a humanist that Heidegger could criticize the biologizing reifications of Nazi anti-Semitism.

MPP5-293 IT WAS ONLY HEIDEGGER'S RESIDUAL HUMANISM, THAT KEPT HIM FROM BEING A COMPLETE NAZI

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.141.

But this interpretation of Heidegger's "error" goes awry on an essential point: it is undoubtedly the case that Heidegger's residual reliance on the tradition of Western metaphysics, instead of abetting his allegiances to the National Awakening of 1933, prevented him from identifying that court with the genocidal imperialism of National Socialism -- for example, with aspects of Nazi doctrine such as "racial thinking." Thus, even at those precarious moments of the Rectoral Address where Heidegger is tempted to fully merge his thought with National Socialist ideology, it is his fidelity to the legacy of Western humanism -- here, the category of "the Greek beginning" that prevents him from losing touch with the authentic impulses of his early philosophy.

MPP5-294 HEIDEGGER LUMPS TOO MANY THINGS TOGETHER AS "HUMANISM"

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.90.

Like Marxism, which also hastened to condemn bourgeois ideology in all modern forms of subjectivity and for this reason also disregarded any difference between human rights and capitalism, between capitalism and fascism, between fascism and Nazism as the ultimate stage of imperialism, Heideggerianism thus managed to lump the political and the philosophical forms of subjectivity in the same category. Everything is "humanism": the Enlightenment and romanticism, individualism and collectivism, capitalism and fascism, Nazism and Stalinism. Provided one protects the position of the critical intellectual endangered by the waning of Marxism, the idea that nothing "has a price" has come to mean, strangely that everything is six of one and a half dozen of another.

MPP5-295 HUMANISM HAS MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.90-1.

Faced with this new form of one-dimensionality we badly need to differentiate between the various faces of humanism, so that a remark of the type "Nazism is a humanism" can be seen to be preposterous. On the question of the definition (or the absence of definition) of man's humanity and hence of his possible differentiation from animality and thinghood, in its core modern thought includes three competing traditions: (1) the thematization of the Enlightenment in the critical philosophy of Rousseau, Kant, and Fichte; (2) the romantic deconstruction of the Enlightenment, whose repercussions are discernible in Hegelianism; and (3) phenomenology. These three traditions are intricately articulated, for criticism and phenomenology are jointly opposed to the romantic image of man but diverge on the crucial question of the status of subjectivity.

MPP5-296 HEIDEGGER SIMPLISTICALLY CONFLATES GAS CHAMBERS AND MECHANIZED AGRICULTURE

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.88.

It is probably just as wrongheaded to conflate the essences of American democracy and totalitarianism as to declare, as did Heidegger -- for the same reasons and in accordance with the same assessment of technology -that "motorized agriculture is . . . in essence the same thing as the manufacture of corpses in the gas chambers and extermination camps, the same thing as the blockading and starvation of nations, the same thing as the manufacture of hydrogen bombs." Simply this: if that is so, what is it not to be the same thing? If motorized agriculture is identical with the gas chambers, we ask, with no intent to be ironical: what is to prevent a gradual chain of equivalences from holding Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, and Yves Mourousi to be the three kings of contemporary barbarism?

MPP5-297 STALINISM AND DEMOCRACY REALLY AREN'T THE SAME

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.88.

Now this is no mere matter of taste: anyone has the right to loathe rock concerts, Disney World, and California. Nonetheless, no one may -- Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss, who lived in the United States, did not make this mistake -- identify, in the name of a higher authority, the barbarism of the Soviet gulags with the depravities of a Western society whose extraordinary political, social, and cultural complexity allows areas of freedom that it would be wholly unwarranted to judge a priori as mere fringes or remnants of a world in decline.

MPP5-298 HEIDEGGER REJECTED DEMOCRACY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.125.

Nowadays, a little too much fuss is made over the Greek polis," remarks Heidegger; that is, the Greek polis as the historical origin of the democratic idea. Instead, all Heidegger can find to admire about the polis as a political entity is the primacy of "rank and domination," the traces of that same *Fuhrerprinzip* he wishes to see transposed to the modern political context.

MPP5-299 HEIDEGGER EXTOLLED A NEW RULING CLASS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.127.

Consequently, for Heidegger, "The authentic idea of the state must necessarily be antiliberal, requiring . . . a new ruling caste which can lay the foundations for the coming of a new kind of man, the superman." Even then, of course, there was the real danger that "the many" would remain immobilized in their inauthentic torpor, failing to recognize the prospects for historical greatness awaiting them. Thus, the *Fuhrerprinzip*, as it manifested itself in Heidegger's own philosophical theory, far from being an expendable, subaltern component, took on the role of a *sine qua non*, the indispensable key to the authentic unfolding of history as the "history of Being."

MPP5-300 HEIDEGGER'S REJECTION OF DEMOCRACY IS BRAZENLY ELITIST

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.46.

The political philosophical implications of this theory are as unequivocal as they are distasteful to a democratic sensibility. On the basis of the philosophical anthropology outlined by Heidegger, the modern conception of popular sovereignty becomes a sheer non sequitur: for those who dwell in the public sphere of everydayness are viewed as essentially incapable of self-rule. Instead, the only viable political philosophy that follows from this standpoint would be brazenly elitist: since the majority of citizens remain incapable of leading meaningful lives when left to their own devices, their only hope for "redemption" lies in the imposition of a "higher spiritual mission" from above. Indeed, this was the explicit political conclusion drawn by Heidegger in 1933. In this way, Heidegger's political thought moves precariously in the direction of the "*Fuhrerprinzip*" or "leadership principle."

MPP5-301 HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE OF THE SUBJECTIVITY OF HUMANISM DESTROYS DEMOCRACY

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.17.

Why can't we realize that under these circumstances criticism of the contemporary world is basically -- Heidegger himself knew this and said it plainly -- radically incompatible with the minimum of subjectivity needed for democratic thinking, in whatever form we conceive it? Mustn't we give the idea of democracy a meaning -- if only, once again, a minimal one -- and assume not only pluralism (which, if necessary, Heideggerianism could conceive of), but also the possibility for human beings to be somehow the authors of the choices they make, or should make, in common? In short, how can we think of democracy without imputing to man the minimal will and mastery that Heidegger denies him because will and mastery in some sense already contain the seeds of the world of technology conceived of as the "will to will"?

MPP5-302 HEIDEGGER'S THOUGHT IS ANTI-DEMOCRATIC AND AUTHORITARIAN

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.56.

Hence, the rudiments of a "collectivist" interpretation of the social ontology of Being and Time are to a certain extent confirmed by the category of resolve. However, as we have already noted, the political implications of this social ontology are anything but benign given the unabashedly elitist motifs that inform the existential analytic. The de facto separation of human natures into authentic and inauthentic is radically undemocratic. The political philosophy that corresponds to this ontological dualism suggests that human beings are divided by nature into leaders and followers. Indeed, this authoritarian conviction was a longstanding precept of the German mandarin intelligentsia and was well reflected in the traditional class divisions of German (especially Prussian) social structure. By celebrating this division between human types and their capacities, Heidegger in effect merely codified in ontological form a time-honored commonplace of German authoritarian political thought.

MPP5-303 HEIDEGGER'S REJECTION OF HUMANISM DESTROYS DEMOCRACY

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.1.

After spending nearly ten years patiently studying Heidegger together at a seminar of the College de Philosophie, we have reached the conviction that his indictment of modern times and humanism, which he saw as going back to Descartes and the philosophes of the Enlightenment, could at the very best lead to a radical criticism of every feature of the democratic world: the world of technology and mass culture, of course, but also the world of human rights and, more generally, the program of resolving through public discussion the questions constantly posed by the contemporary dynamics of a continual break with tradition. So we were not speaking lightly when we used the term "antihumanism" to refer to the philosophical thematization of this rejection of modernity which, whether hostile or anguished, often unjust, sometimes legitimate, was always done from a viewpoint of radical exteriority from which any compromise with modernity was seen as a compromise with one's conscience.

MPP5-304 POST-HUMANISM IS TOTALITARIAN AND REJECTS DEMOCRACY

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, French philosophers, *FRENCH PHILOSOPHY OF THE SIXTIES*, 1990, p.xv-xvi.

Since the (recent) collapse of the Marxist dream of a radiant future, it is the neoconservative critique of the Heideggerian type that is in turn being politically compromised. That the two major critiques of modern humanism have proven to be linked with totalitarian adventures is most significant: Whether conducted in the name of a radiant future or a traditionalist reaction, the total critique of the modern world, because it is necessarily an antihumanism that leads inevitably to seeing in the democratic project, for example in human rights, the prototype of ideology or of the metaphysical illusion, is structurally incapable of taking up, except insincerely and seemingly in spite of itself, the promises that are also those of modernity.

MPP5-305 POST-HUMANISM IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH HUMAN RIGHTS

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, French philosophers, *FRENCH PHILOSOPHY OF THE SIXTIES*, 1990, p.22.

Nevertheless, from Heidegger to Derrida, the gesture of radicalizing the critique of humanism is what constitutes French philosophy of the sixties (in this case what we call French Heideggerianism). It began with the relationship between humanism and the (modern) metaphysics of subjectivity established by Heidegger and became a hyperbolic antihumanism that, twenty years later, can be seen to have had some difficulty accommodating itself to the newly rediscovered reference to human rights.

MPP5-306 HEIDEGGER'S REJECTION OF LOGIC INVITES FANATICISM

Walter Kaufmann, Princeton philosopher, *FROM SHAKESPEARE TO EXISTENTIALISM*, 1980, p.356-7.

The great philosopher, like the great poet, has a vision. Philosophy is not all analysis and scrutiny and intellectual anatomy. Precisely the greatest philosophers have often sold carefulness short because it mattered less to them than did the spirit's fight. They were concerned above all else with something they had seen, or were still seeing--something that seemed to them to belong to a higher order than all mere analysis. Analysis might come afterward, or might be used as a steppingstone: it can never become a substitute for vision any more than criticism can take the place of poetry. But Heidegger fails to see that his disparagement of logical scrutiny and his scorn of "the cheap acid of mere logical acumen" open the floodgates to fanaticism, superstition, and stupidity.

MPP5-307 REJECTING PROPOSITIONAL TRUTH IS AN OPENING TO ABSOLUTE EVIL

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.118-9.

This breakthrough (as we have already indicated) is to be achieved via Heidegger's conception of truth as "unconcealedness." But in the end, one cannot but doubt whether the overall losses are not greater than the partial gains. For the rash dismissal of the idea of propositional truth at the same time entails a wholesale rejection of the truth/untruth dichotomy; the net result being that Heidegger has rendered himself intellectually (and morally) defenseless against the "absolute historical evil" of the twentieth century: the genocidal imperialism of German National Socialism. Heidegger is not merely defenseless in face of this evil but remains sufficiently deluded to defend its true "inner potential" even at a point where the horrific truth of the movement was unveiled for all to see.

MPP5-308 HEIDEGGER CRITIQUE OF PROPOSITIONAL TRUTH LED TO POLITICAL ERROR

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.120-1.

However promising Heidegger's ontological critique of the traditional philosophical ideal of propositional truth may have been it ultimately founders in consequence of his inability to distinguish between "truth" and "error." In fact, as a result of the radicalism with which Heidegger seeks, from the standpoint of the history of Being, to re-pose the question of philosophical truth he comes to perceive the inseparability of truth and error explicitly as a gain in metaphysical profundity. In point of fact, however, it is precisely the complacency with which he allows this fundamental intellectual distinction to blur into meaninglessness that accounts for his egregious errors of political judgment. Just as the Nietzschean superman is "beyond" the traditional moral divide between good and evil, so Heidegger's political judgments--by virtue of a claim to greater metaphysical profundity--are able to imperiously disregard all conventional, modern standards of political and intellectual judgment.

MPP5-309 HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM SHOWS THE DANGERS OF POLITICAL IRRATIONALISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.106.

However, another undeniable factor in Heidegger's enthusiasm for the movement was his personal attraction to Hitler as an archetypal embodiment of charismatic leadership. In this connection, the following exchange between Heidegger and Karl Jaspers in June 1933 may be of more than merely anecdotal import. To the latter's query, "How could you think that a man as uncultivated as Hitler can govern Germany?" Heidegger responds: "It's not a question of culture. Take a look at his wonderful hands!" When understood within the framework of *Seinspolitik*, the meaning of this claim is clear: existential qualifications are more important than intellectual ones. It would be unfair to overburden with theoretical significance an offhand conversational remark made by Heidegger. But in a far from trivial sense, Heidegger's response is superbly illustrative concerning the pitfalls involved in employing "irrationalist," existential criteria in the formulation of political judgments.

MPP5-310 THE CRITIQUE OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT LED TO THE NAZI DEBACLE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.152.

This verdict gives cause for dismay, for it suggests that the philosopher has drawn precisely the wrong conclusions - from the political events of 1933-1945: instead of participating in the attempt to forge, out of the ravages of postwar Europe, a new conception of reason and truth, Heidegger himself has become an even greater "stiff-necked" advocate of counter-enlightenment. His thought seeks refuge in the recrudescence of myth: "openness for the mystery," "the remembrance of Being," and "the mirror-play of the four-fold" (gods and mortals, heaven and earth) becomes the mystified categorical scheme around which his later thinking revolves. The notion that analogous counter-enlightenment attitudes and doctrines might have played a key role in the spiritual preparation for the German catastrophe is a thought that has obviously never crossed his mind.

MPP5-311 HEIDEGGER'S CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY IS SIMPLY RECYCLED ROMANTICISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.166-7.

In the end, Heidegger's critique of modernity ends up by retracing the well-worn path already trod by the German romantics: "poetic transcendence" is abstractly counterposed to the ills of modern world consumed by the imperatives of technical reason. Thus, "To 'dwell poetically' means: to stand in the presence of the gods and to be involved in the proximity of the essence of things." This is Heidegger's solution to an age of (double) "affliction": an age that is caught between "the no-longer of the gods that have fled and the not-yet of the god to come."

MPP5-312 HEIDEGGER WAS SEDUCED TO NAZISM BY ITS CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.105-6.

In part, many of the virtues of National Socialism were deduced by Heidegger *ex negativo*: they pertained more to what National Socialism was against than what it advocated in a positive sense. Among these components must be numbered its disdain for democratic institutions, political parties (it always strove to present itself as a "movement" rather than as a political party in the traditional sense), "intellectualism," bourgeois egalitarianism, aesthetic modernism, and "cosmopolitanism." In sum, the movement seemed in many ways to be the legitimate political heir to the conservative revolutionary critique of Western modernity with which Heidegger identified in so many crucial respects.

MPP5-313 HEIDEGGER'S CULTURAL CRITIQUE LED TO NAZISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.74-5.

As Franzen observes, there is little doubt that a vitalist preference for danger, risk, and excess, coupled with a pronounced distaste for conditions of bourgeois "everydayness," may be counted as among the "most important ingredients of the mentality of National Socialism." Nor would it take Heidegger himself long to draw the logical political conclusions from this program of cultural critique.

MPP5-314 CRITIQUE IS NEEDED TO REDEEM ENLIGHTENMENT

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.4.

In opposition to the radical critique of reason, one would do better, it seems, to consider the program enunciated by Horkheimer and Adorno in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: the idea that a "critique of enlightenment [must] prepare the way for a positive notion of enlightenment which will release it from entanglement in blind domination." In other words, whereas the poetical-rhetorical outbidding of reason - in the name of "Being," "sovereignty," or whatever form of hypostatized, precategoryal otherness - has become one of the major intellectual temptations of our day, it is a temptation that should be resisted. For as Adorno knew well, only the hand that inflicted the wound can cure the disease. Philosophy has no other choice. "It must strive, by way of the concept, to transcend the concept."

MPP5-315 HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM REFLECTED HIS PHILOSOPHICAL CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY

Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Professors of Philosophy, the Sorbonne and the University of Nantes, *HEIDEGGER AND MODERNITY*, 1990, p.73.

For all that, to portray Heidegger's neoconservatism as a mere "reflection" of what was then taking place sociohistorically would be to propose a caricature of reductive sociology: things are far more tricky, and Heidegger took up Nazism for reasons that were philosophical and internal to his criticism of modernity.

MPP5-316 HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM WASN'T JUST A PERSONAL FAILURE

Michael Zimmerman, Professor of Philosophy, Tulane, *ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS*, Fall 1993, p.203-4.

In assessing the suitability of calling Heidegger a forerunner of their movement, deep ecologists should recall that he used his own philosophy to support National Socialism, and in a manner that was more enduring and profound than his self-justifying postwar statements would suggest. Indeed, he continued to speak well of that movement more than twenty years after World War II. His affiliation with Nazism cannot be explained as a personal failure, for he believed that the movement's "inner truth and greatness" was consistent with his own critical view of modernity. He regarded democracy, capitalism, socialism, scientific rationalism, consumerism, and "progressive" views of history in general as the culmination of Europe's long decline from its glorious beginning in ancient Greece. For him, National Socialism was an effort to counter modern progress, which he viewed as a degenerate, nihilistic process that was devastating the Earth and darkening the world. To restore the rank, order, and distinctions obliterated by industrial modernity, a radical revolution was needed, a "second beginning" equal in power to the beginning initiated by the ancient Greeks. Jettisoning ethical standards consistent with the Jewish, Christian, socialist, and liberal democratic traditions, he had no moral basis for challenging the decisions made by those who portrayed themselves as the gods' forerunners. Unfortunately, those people later turned out to be mass murderers. By the late 1930s, he concluded that the historical form taken by National Socialism, including its crude naturalistic, biological, and racist views, was another expression of technological modernity, but he never abandoned his conviction that there was a great potential at the core of the movement.

MPP5-317 HEIDEGGER CONTINUED TO BELIEVE NAZISM WAS RIGHT IN THEORY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.126.

Heidegger at first viewed National Socialism in Nietzschean terms as an authentic overcoming of European nihilism; that is, as a radical historical response to "the decline of the West." And although his disillusionment with the actual practice of the movement dates roughly from 1936, until the end of his life he continued to believe (as he avows in the concluding pages of *Einführung in die Metaphysik*) in the "inner truth and greatness of National Socialism" - that is, when the movement is understood from the superior vantage point of "the history of Being."

MPP5-318 HEIDEGGER WAS AN ENTHUSIASTIC NAZI

Arthur Herman, Professor of History, George Mason, *THE IDEA OF DECLINE IN WESTERN HISTORY*, 1997, p.341. As rector of the University of Freiburg, Heidegger threw himself into the National Socialist revolution with enthusiasm. His activities on behalf of the Nazi regime that, even after 1945, he could not bring himself to repudiate are now well documented.

MPP5-319 HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM DERIVED FROM HIS VIEW OF HUMAN NATURE

Stanley Rosen, philosopher, Penn State, *NIHILISM*, 1969, p.121-2.

During Heidegger's brief tenure as rector of Freiburg University, he delivered a number of speeches and official pronouncements which may fairly be described as an effort to justify national socialism by assimilating the terms of his own philosophy to those of the popular Nazi vocabulary. One of the most useful attempts by a student of the period, J-P. Faye, to demonstrate this point seems to be virtually unnoticed by English writers. In his analysis of Heidegger's language, Faye shows, for example, how Heidegger accommodated to the rhetoric of the vulgar and to that of the academic community depending upon the occasion, and how his own rhetoric permitted him to introduce revolutionary and demagogic political idiom into theoretical speeches. The least one can say is that the ease with which Heidegger succeeded in accommodating the teaching of Being and Time to the resolute choice of Hitler and the Nazi party provides us with an essential clue to the political philosophy implicit in his ontological analysis of human existence.

MPP5-320 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA SHOWS HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM WASN'T INCIDENTAL

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.8.

But given the results of the new biographical researches into Heidegger's past--which have established that Heidegger's National Socialist sentiments, far from being an episodic phenomenon in the philosopher's life, continued to haunt his thinking at least until the mid-1940s--it has become increasingly difficult to avoid the conclusion that Heidegger's Nazi experience stood in an "essential" relation to his philosophical project as a whole.

MPP5-321 FARIAS'S STUDY OF HEIDEGGER IS BRILLIANT

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.171.

Farias's extraordinary, brilliantly researched study of Heidegger covers his repellent ideas, career, and attempts at subterfuge after Hitler's collapse - and the academic enterprise of his acolytes to see this self-anointed Fuhrer of National Socialist philosophy as more than an ideological miscreant. No less is Farias's book an indictment of Heideggerian mandarins, big and small, in the academy today.

MPP5-322 HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM WASN'T AN INCIDENTAL MISTAKE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.95.

Heidegger's involvement with National Socialism has often been described as a misunderstanding or an error that had little to do with his basic philosophical orientation. But as Franzen observes: Such a misunderstanding and error were only possible because of those "consonances," hidden and manifest, between National Socialist ideology and Heidegger's philosophy.... Only because so many "depth-dimensions" in Heidegger's thought--in Being and Time and then in his investigation of the "history of Being"--were related to those of the National Socialist worldview could Heidegger fall victim to the illusion that National Socialism was something greater and larger than it was in fact.

MPP5-323 HEIDEGGER STRESSED THAT THOUGHT CAN'T BE DIVORCED FROM ACTION

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.33.

Although an understanding of Heidegger's political thought should in no way be reduced to the concrete political choices made by the philosopher in the 1930s, neither is it entirely separable therefrom. And while the strategy of his apologists has been to dissociate the philosophy from the empirical person, thereby suggesting that Heidegger's Nazism was an unessential aberration in the hope of exempting the philosophy from political taint, this strategy will not wash for several reasons. To begin with, Heidegger's philosophy itself would seem to rule out the artificial, traditional philosophical separation between thought and action. In truth, much of Being and Time is concerned with overcoming the conventional philosophical division between theoretical and practical reason; a fact that is evident above all in the "pragmatic" point of departure of the analytic of Dasein: "Being in-the-world" rather than the Cartesian "thinking substance." More importantly, though, what is perhaps the central category of Heidegger's existential ontology--the category of "authenticity"--automatically precludes such a facile separation between philosophical outlook and concrete life-choices.

MPP5-324 HEIDEGGER SAW A PROFOUND LINK BETWEEN NAZISM AND HIS PHILOSOPHY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.75.

In a 1936 conversation with Heidegger outside of Rome, Karl Lowith expressed his disagreement with recent reports alleging that there was no intrinsic connection between Heidegger's philosophy and his political option for National Socialism. Instead, Lowith suggested that his former mentor's "partisanship for National Socialism lay in the essence of his philosophy." Heidegger agreed with Lowith "without reservation, and added that his concept of 'historicity' was the basis of his political 'engagement.'" Lowith's description of his "last meeting with Heidegger" is fascinating not only for the crucial information it supplies toward a proper understanding of the philosopher's political biography. It also contains a striking confirmation by Heidegger himself that his political convictions evolved directly from his philosophy; and that, moreover, it is the concept of "historicity," as elaborated in *Being and Time*, that specifically accounts for his "engagement" on behalf of the National Socialist cause. While Heidegger's claim is far from unambiguous, there is one interpretation that seems to recommend itself above all others.

MPP5-325 HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM WAS GROUNDED IN PHILOSOPHICAL CONVICTION

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.65-6.

The aporetic nature of Heideggerian decisionism is thus indicated by its "negative" and "positive" dispositions. Both determined, in a complementary manner, Heidegger's partisanship for the National Socialist cause. For this was a partisanship that was carefully grounded in premeditated philosophical conviction. The "negative" side lies, as we have just seen, in a nihilistic historical opportunism that promotes unprincipled conformity with whatever choices are presented under given historical conditions. It is this side as well that mandates the a priori rejection of "bourgeois" political forms--liberalism, constitutionalism, parliamentarianism, etc.--and predisposes Heidegger toward a choice of "extreme" solutions: since bourgeois life-forms--represented by the *Existenzialien* of "everydayness"--are discounted in advance as degraded and profane, only radical alternatives to this thoroughly prosaic order of life will suffice.

MPP5-326 HIS NAZISM REFLECTED THE INNERMOST TENDENCIES OF HEIDEGGER

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.66.

Heidegger's involvement with National Socialism--which was of the order of deep-seated, existential commitment--was far from being an adventitious, merely biographical episode. Instead, it was rooted in the innermost tendencies of his thought. This claim in no way entails the assumption that Nazism is somehow a necessary and inevitable outgrowth of the philosophy of *Being and Time*. It does suggest, however, that the politics of the Nazi movement emphatically satisfied the desiderata of authentic historical commitment adumbrated in that work.

MPP5-327 THE SINCERITY OF HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM IS UNDENIABLE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.91-2.

Heidegger's commitment to the National Socialist program of radical social reform as articulated in the Rectoral Address can be seen in both his future conduct as Rector as well as in the numerous political articles and speeches he composed during his year in office. In this respect, there can little doubt concerning the sincerity of his support for the policies of the new regime. As he says at one point, "The National Socialist Revolution brings the total transformation of our German *Dasein*.... Let not propositions and 'ideas' be the rules of your Being. The Führer alone is the present and future German reality and its law." As his former student, Herbert Marcuse, would later comment about these lines: such a claim is "actually the betrayal of philosophy as such and of everything it stands for." What Marcuse found incomprehensible about this and similar claims was how this matchless interpreter of the Western philosophical tradition could come to view the National Socialist movement as the positive culmination of this intellectual heritage.

MPP5-328 HEIDEGGER SUPPORTED NAZIS EVEN AFTER THEIR ABUSES WERE CLEAR

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.130.

As these lines were composed, the German army stood in ruins before Stalingrad, and there could no longer be any doubt about the gruesome nature of Hitler's *Endlösung* to the "Jewish question": the entire Jewish population of Germany had been forcibly removed, and the reports from the death-camps had already made the rounds among the civil population. That the world conflagration alluded to by Heidegger had been unleashed by Germany itself--specifically, by a political movement that Heidegger had once vigorously and wholeheartedly supported--which thus represented the "cause" of the catastrophe rather than its "solution," is a fact that--appalling--seems beyond the pale of the philosopher's powers of historical comprehension.

MPP5-329 HEIDEGGER CONTINUED TO BELIEVE IN THE POTENTIAL OF NAZISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.98-9.

That Heidegger continued to adhere even after the war (and very likely, until the end of his life) to the distinction between the original historical potential of National Socialism as a "countermovement" to nihilism and its subsequent factual degradation is evidenced by the following unguarded admission in "The Rectorate 1933-34": "I saw in the movement that had come to power the possibility of an inner gathering and renewal of the Volk and a way for it to find its western-historical [*geschichtlich-abendlandischen*] destiny." Similarly, when questioned as late as 1966 in the *Spiegel* interview about the paean to the "greatness and glory of the [National] Awakening" with which the Rectoral Address concludes, Heidegger simply confesses, "Yes, I was convinced of that."

MPP5-330 HEIDEGGER MAINTAINS A JUSTIFICATION FOR HUMAN DOMINATION OF NATURE

Michael Zimmerman, Professor of Philosophy, Tulane, ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS, Fall 1993, p.201.

Deep ecologists are sometimes suspicious of Heidegger's claims about the uniqueness of humanity's capacity for understanding being, for Western society has always justified its domination of nature by portraying it as inferior to what is "uniquely" human: soul, rationality, spirit, language. Such suspicions are fueled by Heidegger's claim that there is something worse than the destruction of all life on Earth by nuclear war.

MPP5-331 HEIDEGGER MAINTAINS HUMAN EXCEPTIONALISM

Leslie Paul Thiele, Professor of Political Science, University of Florida, TIMELY MEDITATIONS, 1995, p.185.

Heidegger, as Zimmerman notes, also supports a nonanthropocentric approach to the earth and the world. This is absolutely true, and has obvious ecological merit. But Heidegger does not suggest that we replace anthropocentrism with biocentrism. Biocentrism, intrinsic to most deep-ecological perspectives, relegates the human species to the same status as all other organisms." Despite his fervent attack on subjectivism and humanism, Heidegger firmly maintains human exceptionalism. He maintains this exceptionalism because of human being's unique disclosive capacities; "it is man, open toward Being, who alone lets Being arrive as presence" (ID 31 - 32; see also BT 28, 35). Animals, Heidegger writes, cannot engage in the "work" - philosophical, artistic, or political - in which the disclosure of Being in thought, word, or deed occurs. And this incapacity of beasts arises for one simple reason: "they lack freedom" (PT 109). Our capacity for disclosive freedom makes our sojourn here on earth exceptional, however brief this sojourn is in cosmic or evolutionary terms.

MPP5-332 HEIDEGGER REMAINED ANTHROPOCENTRIC

Michael Zimmerman, Professor of Philosophy, Tulane, ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS, Fall 1993, p.213.

One important difference between the two is that while deep ecologists maintain that humanity is a part of life on Earth, Heidegger, like many other anti-Darwinian conservatives, held that humans are not animals. In fact, he argued that the modernity's "naturalistic humanism" was the final, nihilistic stage of Aristotle's definition of humans as rational animals. Because of this attitude, his former student, Karl Lowith, accused him of perpetuating the anthropocentrism and dualism so characteristic of the metaphysical and theological traditions which he purported to overcome.

MPP5-333 HEIDEGGER'S POLITICAL VIEWS DESTROY CHECKS ON TOTALITARISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE POLITICS OF BEING, 1990, p.128-9.

According to a charitable reading of Heidegger's doctrine of Sernspolitik--his theory of the integral interrelationship between creators, the yolk, and the state as viewed from the standpoint of the history of Being--the philosopher is merely advocating a theory of national self-determination to be based on the "higher powers" of poetry, philosophy, and statesmanship; a doctrine that, thus understood, is essentially unobjectionable. In truth, however, the historical and conceptual bases of Heidegger's theory are decidedly more complex. They are inseparable from his acceptance of the (proto-fascistic) conservative revolutionary critique of modernity, including the imperialist vision of Germany as "master of Mitteleuropa"; from a systematic devaluation of all conceivable institutional checks vis-a-vis the eventuality of totalitarian state power; and from a glorification of the ideals of authority, hierarchy, and rank that in its essentials is indistinguishable from the Nazi Fuhrerprinzip itself. When these systematic aspects of his philosophical theory are in turn viewed against the background of the philosopher's own numerous observations and asides in support of Germany's National Revolutionary course in the 1930s, the portrait of the man and the thinker that emerges is far from innocent. Philosophy and politics are not related in a contingent or nonessential fashion. Instead, as our theoretical reconstruction has attempted to show, they exist as communicating vessels.

MPP5-334 HEIDEGGER MADE POLITICS TOTALITARIAN BY MAKING IT METAPHYSICAL

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE POLITICS OF BEING, 1990, p.117.

Though we may readily accept and even welcome Heidegger's claim that works of art reveal the truth or essence of beings ("The work [of art] . . . is not the reproduction of some particular entity that happens to be present at any given time," observes Heidegger; "it is, on the contrary, the reproduction of the thing's general essence"), we must question the attempt to transpose aesthetico-metaphysical criteria to the realm of political life proper. Is it in point of fact meaningful to speak of the "unveiling of truth" as the *raison d'être* of politics in the same way one can say this of a work of art or a philosophical work? Is not politics rather a nonmetaphysical sphere of human interaction, in which the content of collective human projects, institutions, and laws is articulated, discussed, and agreed upon? Is it not, moreover, in some sense dangerous to expect "metaphysical results" from politics? For is not politics instead a sphere of human plurality, difference, and multiplicity; hence, a realm in which the more exacting criteria of philosophical truth must play a subordinate role? And thus, would it not in fact be to place a type of totalitarian constraint on politics to expect it to deliver over truth in such pristine and unambiguous fashion.

MPP5-335 HEIDEGGER'S COMMUNITARIAN STATISM WAS TOTALITARIAN

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.116.

Many similar objections to Heidegger's political philosophy have been raised by Karsten Harries in his essay on "Heidegger as a Political Thinker": Unfortunately this project [i.e., the extension of Heidegger's analysis of the work of art to the state] became intertwined with a rejection of the modern conception of the state, with its separation of the ethical and the political, of the private and the public, separations which are difficult to reconcile with the kind of unity and self-integration demanded by Heidegger's conception of authenticity. Recalling Nietzsche's hope for a creative resurrection of Greek tragedy, Heidegger calls for a state which would be a "repetition"--in his sense of the word--of the Greek polis, a state which would assign man his ethos, his place as member of a genuine community. It is this romantic conception of the state with its fusion or confusion of the political and the social which we must question. The attempt to restructure the modern state in the image of the polis will tend towards totalitarianism.

MPP5-336 EXISTENTIALIST REJECTION OF REASON SURRENDERS TO TOTAL STATISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.130.

As a disillusioned former student would write of his fallen mentor shortly after the Rectoral Address: Existentialism collapses in the moment when its political theory is realized. The total-authoritarian state which it yearned for gives the lie to all its truths. Existentialism accompanies its collapse with a self-abasement that is unique in intellectual history; it carries out its own history as a satyr-play to the end. It began philosophically as a great debate with western rationalism and idealism, in order to redeem the historical concretion of individual existence for this intellectual heritage. And it ends philosophically with the radical denial of its own origins; the struggle against reason drives it blindly into the arms of the reigning powers. In their service and protection it betrays that great philosophy which it once celebrated as the pinnacle of western thinking.

MPP5-337 HEIDEGGER'S POLITICS WERE INHERENTLY TOTALITARIAN

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.89.

The political object of Heidegger's speech is clear. The shallowness of bourgeois life--evident, for example, in the fact that knowledge is shorn of essential ties to the Volksgemeinschaft--can only be radically overcome via the wholesale integration of life in a society of total mobilization. The multiple fragmentations and divisions of bourgeois society--those of political parties, classes, academic disciplines, and competing value-claims--can be resolved only by recourse to a total state. Since Heidegger fully shares the conservative revolutionary critique of liberal democracy, not only does he have no reservations concerning a totalitarian alternative; he in fact perceives the latter as a form of political deliverance. The various Bindungen he emphasizes in the address--labor service, military service, and service in knowledge--aim at the creation of an all-encompassing, total state in which the (modern) specialization of competences is abolished and all pursuits are integrated by a common goal: the realization of the historical-spiritual destiny of the German Volk.

MPP5-338 HEIDEGGER'S EMBRACE OF NAZISM REFLECTS HIS MORAL NIHILISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.65.

The consequences of this decisionistic "ethical vacuum," coupled with the prejudicial nature of Heidegger's conservative revolutionary degradation of the modern life-world, suggests an undeniable theoretical cogency behind Heidegger's ignominious life-choice of 1933. In its rejection of "moral convention"--which qua convention, proves inimical to acts of heroic bravado--decisionism shows itself to be distinctly nihilistic vis-a-vis the totality of inherited ethical paradigms." For this reason, the implicit political theory of Being and Time--and in this respect, it proves a classical instance of the German conservative-authoritarian mentality of the period--remains devoid of fundamental "liberal convictions" that might have served as an ethico-political bulwark against the enticement of fascism. Freed of such bourgeois qualms, the National Socialist movement presented itself as a plausible material "filling" for the empty vessel of authentic decision and its categorical demand for existentiell-historical content. The summons toward an "authentic historical destiny" enunciated in Being and Time was thus provided with an ominously appropriate response by Germany's National Revolution. The latter, in effect, was viewed by Heidegger as the ontic fulfillment of the categorical demands of "historicity": it was Heidegger's own choice of a "hero," a "destiny," and a "community."

MPP5-339 HEIDEGGER'S ATTEMPT TO OVERCOME NIHILISM LED TO ITS ACCEPTANCE

Stanley Rosen, Penn State philosopher, *NIHILISM*, 1969, p.101. In more concrete terms, Heidegger began his journey as a student of Christian theology and Aristotle's metaphysics. His response to the nihilism of post-Nietzschean Europe, and specifically to the political situation following the First World War, led him to a reinterpretation of Nietzsche. Heidegger radicalized the significance of Zarathustra's revelation that "God is dead," making use of elements from Christianity, Greek philosophy, German thought, and the spiritual despair of the decades culminating in the Nazi rise to power. His intention was to overcome European nihilism by setting the stage for a new understanding of "the question of Being." In my opinion, it is clear that the development of an ontology of historicity was conditioned by Heidegger's response to the political and social events of 1919 and thereafter.

MPP5-340 HEIDEGGER USES OBSCURE LANGUAGE TO MASK HIS CONFUSION

Walter Kaufmann, Princeton philosopher, *FROM SHAKESPEARE TO EXISTENTIALISM*, 1980, p.339. "Language is the house of Being," says Heidegger; but in truth his language is the house in which he hides, and his Gothic terminology is like a row of towers that frightens us away while it gives him a feeling of security. His philosophy is like a castle that, though certainly not beautiful, stands out from a generally dull landscape and catches the eye. We should not dream of settling down beneath it to spend our lives, like Kafka's K., in futile efforts to penetrate the mysteries that, more often than not, are expressions of confusion rather than profundity.

MPP5-341 HEIDEGGER'S PHILOSOPHER JARGON REVEALS HIS AUTHORITARIANISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.20. For the "mimesis of fate" promoted by Heidegger's imperious and presumptive use of philosophical terminology reveals the latently authoritarian tendencies of his thought in general. Or, as Sollner concludes, "the authoritarian sense or non-sense of Heideggerian philosophy lies in its jargon and its linguistic gestures."

MPP5-342 HEIDEGGER'S CATEGORIES ARE BASED ON LINGUISTIC CONFUSIONS

A.J. Ayer, Professor of Philosophy, University College, London, *LANGUAGE, TRUTH AND LOGIC*, 1946, p.43-4. In general, the postulation of real non-existent entities results from the superstition, just now referred to, that, to every word or phrase that can be the grammatical subject of a sentence, there must somewhere be a real entity corresponding. For as there is no place in the empirical world for many of these "entities," a special non-empirical world is invoked to house them. To this error must be attributed, not only the utterances of a Heidegger, who bases his metaphysics on the assumption that "Nothing" is a name which is used to denote something peculiarly mysterious, but also the prevalence of such problems as those concerning the reality of propositions and universals whose senselessness, though less obvious, is no less complete.

MPP5-343 HEIDEGGER'S DISCOURSE WAS BANKRUPT

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.189.

It is necessary to tear off Heidegger's linguistic mask - one that hides the 'authentic' face of postmodernism generally - if we are to get to the essentials of the Heidegger-Derrida connection. The ease with which Heidegger's language permits him to engage in circular reasoning; his typically mystical recourse to 'silence' as the mode of discourse for 'conscience'; his contradictory emphasis on personalism on the one hand and the subordination of individual inclinations to the collective 'destiny' of the 'Volk', on the other -- all can be examined only in a book-length account of Heideggerian thought.

MPP5-344 HEIDEGGER'S THOUGHT IS ESSENTIALLY AUTHORITARIAN

Walter Kaufmann, Princeton philosopher, *FROM SHAKESPEARE TO EXISTENTIALISM*, 1980, p.360.

Although Heidegger suggests at the end of the Introduction that he is condemned to endure in perplexity and that this is the human condition in our time he really ends by "proving" this point with a quotation from Holderlin. It may be objected that the final quotation is merely a pleasant stylistic device. But does Heidegger ever entertain the possibility that Holderlin or Sophocles, Heraclitus or Parmenides might be mistaken about anything? His attitude toward these men is invariably one of humility before authority. Any criticism of the pre-Socratics is out of the question. It is assumed that they, living so near the beginning of Western thought, knew what we do not know and would like to know. When Heidegger explores the nature of man, he gives us a translation of the wonderful second chorus from Sophocles' *Antigone* and then interprets it. He proceeds exactly like a theologian who cites Scripture.

MPP5-345 HEIDEGGER WAS AN INTELLECTUAL AUTHORITARIAN

Walter Kaufmann, Princeton philosopher, *DISCOVERING THE MIND: NIETZSCHE, HEIDEGGER, AND BUBER*, 1980, p.189.

Heidegger's thinking is deeply authoritarian. His insistence that he was engaged in existential ontology or fundamental ontology as well as the proliferation of strange labels helped to immunize his discourse against the obvious charge that it was absurdly dogmatic and apodictic. Any appeal to evidence or rival observations and interpretations was discounted in advance. So was empirical research as a matter of principle. All this is as different from Nietzsche as can be and, of course, also from Goethe. Heidegger, like Kant, did not admit hypotheses into philosophy, demanded certainty, and purchased the semblance of it through extreme obscurity.

MPP5-346 HEIDEGGER GLORIFIED VIOLENCE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.126.

Thus, in Heidegger's metaphysical schema, violence takes on the character of an ontological imperative; it is an essential means possessed by the Fuhrer elite to combat the forces of everydayness and routine, whose predominance prevents the posing of the question of Being. However, what comes through unmistakably in this philosophical glorification of violence are the patent affinities between Heidegger's Gewalt-tatige--the "shock-troops of Being," as it were--and the National Socialist rhetoric of Sturm und Kampf. Whatever its intrinsic philosophical merit, this theory of a creative elite who are "apolis" and "without statute" cannot help but strike one as a fanciful but crude, post festum justification of the Nazi Fuhrerprinzip and its train of illegalities. As devoid of any underlying moral or legal restraints, Heidegger's glorified image of a Fuhrerstaat zealously underwrites the totalitarian claims of the ruling elite. The elevated metaphysical terms of discussion cannot mask the ease with which his approach lends itself to abuse: despite Heidegger's qualification that "rulers alone" must rule, the theory represents carte blanche for authoritarian licentiousness.

MPP5-347 HEIDEGGER'S EXISTENTIALISM VENERATES POWER

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.108-9.

Toward the end of a long discussion of the intellectual origins of Nazi imperialist geopolitical doctrines, Neumann offers the following observations: What is left as justification for the [Grossdeutsche] Reich? Not racism, not the idea of the Holy Roman Empire, and certainly not some democratic nonsense like popular sovereignty or self-determination. Only the Reich itself remains. It is its own justification. The philosophical roots of the argument are to be found in the existential philosophy of Heidegger. Transferred to the realm of politics, existentialism argues that power and might are true: power is a sufficient theoretical base for more power. Germany lies in the center, it is well on its way toward becoming the mightiest state. Therefore, it is justified in building the new order. An acute critic has remarked about [Christoph] Steding [author of the 1938 work, *The Reich and the Sickness of European Culture*]: "From the remains of what, with Heidegger, was still an effective transcendental solipsism, his pupil constructs a national solipsism."

MPP5-348 HEIDEGGER WAS A REACTIONARY ELITIST

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.189.

In such passages Heidegger is already, as early as in *Being and Time*, insinuating a 'leadership principle' into his 'ontology'. What is unambiguous is that he is a reactionary elitist, for whom the 'They' - bluntly, the Nietzschean 'herd' - is the inauthentic raw material of the authentic few, most notably the German reactionary mandarins who are guided by conscience, guilt, care, and a heroic stance toward the certainty of death.

MPP5-349 HEIDEGGER IS AN OVERRATED REACTIONARY

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.186.

Today's academic investment in Heidegger (as well as in Foucault and -- Derrida) is so immense that anyone who challenges Heidegger's status as the 'greatest philosopher' of the twentieth century risks garnering opprobrium verging on defamation. Yet the emperor, in fact, is wearing very few clothes indeed. Far from being a significant philosopher, Martin Heidegger is not only grossly overrated as a thinker but he is one of the most reactionary on the spectrum of Weltanschauung thought.

MPP5-350 HEIDEGGER WAS A CONSISTENT GERMAN NATIONALIST

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.186-7.

More pretentious and mystical than his acolytes are prone to acknowledge, Heidegger was a product of south German provincialism." The trajectory of his ideas from the 1920s to his last works in the 1970s situates him in what Fritz Stern has called a Kulturreligion that embraced nationalism . . . for it insisted on the identity of German idealism and nationalism. The essence of the German nation was expressed in its spirit, revealed by its artists and thinkers, and at times still reflected in the life of the simple, unspoiled folk.... Common were the lamentations about the decline of the German spirit, the defeat of idealism by the forces of realism in politics and of materialism in business.

MPP5-351 HEIDEGGER'S QUASI-RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM LEAD TO NAZISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.33.

As Lowith observes: Whoever . . . reflects on Heidegger's later partisanship for Hitler, will find in this first formulation of the idea of historical "existence" the constituents of his political decision of several years hence. One need only abandon the still quasi-religious isolation and apply [the concept of] authentic "existence"--always particular to each individual--and the "duty" which follows from it to "specifically German existence" and its historical destiny in order thereby to introduce into the general course of German existence the energetic, but empty movement of existential categories ("to decide for oneself," "to take stock of oneself in face of nothingness," "wanting one's ownmost destiny," and "to take responsibility for oneself") and to proceed from there to "destruction" now on the terrain of politics.

MPP5-352 HEIDEGGER EXTOLLED GERMAN NATIONALISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.129-30.

And in his Heraclitus lectures of the same year, Heidegger reaffirms his delusory conviction--against a massive weight of historical evidence to the contrary--that Germany and the Germans represent the only force capable of redeeming the West from a fate of impending catastrophe: "the Germans and they alone can save the West for its history," he declaims. "The planet is in flames. The essence of man is out of joint. Only from the Germans can there come a world-historical reflection--if, that is, they find and preserve 'Germanness' [das Deutsche]."

MPP5-353 HEIDEGGER WAS A STRONG CULTURAL NATIONALIST

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.94.

And though Heidegger may not have shared the Nazi emphasis on race, he, too, was convinced that Germany and the Germans occupied a special niche in world-history--they had a "destiny" to fulfill. Thus, only German Kultur, as opposed to the Zivilisation of the Western nations, offered the prospect of a true revival of the "Greek beginning." His belief in a special affinity between German language and culture and that of the ancient Greeks was one shared by many of his countrymen since the end of the eighteenth century. When viewed from this perspective, there was unquestionably an inner conceptual logic behind his "enlistment" for the National Socialist cause in the 1930s.

MPP5-354 HEIDEGGER REJECTED INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

Michael Zimmerman, Professor of Philosophy, Tulane, *ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS*, Fall 1993, p.209-10.

Heidegger also favored abandoning individual rights. Speaking in favor of the Nazi "revolution" that would save Western civilization from extinction, he proclaimed that "The individual by himself counts for nothing." Hence, he was silent while thousands of German socialists, communists, liberals, and other "un-German" types were rounded up into concentration camps near Freiburg. After the war, moreover, he refused to comment on the Nazi's murder of millions of Jews and other "vermin." During difficult times, he apparently concluded, difficult things have to be done. If Manes' radical views prevail during a time of "ecological scarcity," what would happen to selfish, ecologically unenlightened people who refused to "abandon" their inalienable rights? Would they be rounded up and possibly eliminated so that the Earth could recover from the effects of the "human cancer" now afflicting it?

MPP5-355 HEIDEGGER'S LATER PHILOSOPHY IS ANTITHETICAL TO FREEDOM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.139.

Consequently, it is difficult to disagree with the verdict expressed by the philosopher Hans Blumenberg concerning Heidegger's later work: "The absolutism of 'Being' is in truth only the continuation of medieval results by other means." By "medieval results" Blumenberg is referring to the shackles of scholastic ontology, whose static categorical hierarchies closely mirror those of the social milieu whence it emanates. And in this respect, Heidegger's later recourse to the doctrine of Seinsgeschichte constitutes a deliberate regression behind the potentials for human autonomy and freedom that are provided by the modern age. As Blumenberg explains, in Heidegger's work: "The [modern] epoch appears as an absolute 'fact' - or better: as a 'datum'; it stands, sharply circumscribed, outside any logic, adapted to a state of error [Irrnis], and in spite of its immanent pathos of domination (or precisely on account of it) finally permits only the one attitude that is the sole option that the 'history of Being' leaves open to man: submission."

MPP5-356 HEIDEGGER REJECTS LIBERTY, EQUALITY, AND DEMOCRACY

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.168.

'Authenticity', it can be said without any philosophical frills, lay in the pristine Teutonic world of the tribal Germans who retained their ties with 'the Gods', and with later peoples who still tried to nourish their past amidst the blighted traits of the modern world. Since some authors try to muddy Heidegger's prelapsarian message by focusing on his assumed belief in individual freedom and ignoring his hatred of the French Revolution and its egalitarian, 'herd'-like democracy of the 'They', it is worth emphasizing that such a view withers in the light of his denial of individuality. 'The individual by himself counts for nothing', he declared after becoming a member of the National Socialist party in 1933. 'The fate of our Volk in its state counts for everything.'

MPP5-357 THE EMPHASIS ON BEING DESTROYS HUMAN FREEDOM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.153.

Consequently, the major problem with Heidegger's later philosophy is that the doctrine of Being, in its oppressive omnipotence, causes the conceptual space in which freedom can be meaningfully thought to all but disappear. In light of this fact, Jaspers' verdict concerning Heidegger's inability to grasp the nature of human freedom--"Heidegger doesn't know what freedom is"--becomes readily intelligible. For according to the theory of the "destining of Being," all the worldly events we experience undergo a prior, other-worldly, metaontological determination.

MPP5-358 FREEDOM IS INDISPENSABLE TO MEANINGFUL HUMAN LIFE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.154.

The project of human freedom, incessantly belittled by "essential thinking," receives its inspiration from the conviction that "it is more honest, courageous, self-clairvoyant, hence a higher mode of life, to choose in lucidity than it is to hide one's choices behind the supposed structure of things." In this respect, the concept of freedom, as it has been handed down to us on the basis of the Greek ideal of autonomic or self-rule, represents an indispensable touchstone of the Western tradition: it has become a *sine qua non* for the ideal of a meaningful human existence. And thus, in a far from trivial sense, we view a life led under conditions of "unfreedom" as a life deprived of an essential prerequisite for the fulfillment of human potential. It would be a life bereft of those autonomous capacities of decision and choice on the basis of which alone we are able to identify and define our projects as our projects. We are of course simultaneously defined by a preexisting network of values, institutions, and belief-systems, which have themselves been shaped and handed-down by the members of a given community or group. Yet, it is our capacity to "choose in lucidity" as to which among these would endow our projects with direction and significance that forms the indispensable basis of a meaningful human life.

MPP5-359 THEORY SHOULD FOCUS ON SPECIFIC SITUATIONS

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.145.

The notion of theory as a toolkit means: (i) The theory to be constructed is not a system but an instrument, a logic of the specificity of power relations and the struggles around them; (ii) That this investigation can only be carried out step by step on the basis of reflection (which will necessarily be historical in some of its aspects) on given situations.

MPP5-360 GENERAL THEORIES IMPEDE CRITICISM; LOCAL CRITICISM WORKS

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.80-1.

I would say, then, that what has emerged in the course of the last ten or fifteen years is a sense of the increasing vulnerability to criticism of things, institutions, practices, discourses. A certain fragility has been discovered in the very bedrock of existence -- even, and perhaps above all, in those aspects of it that are most familiar, most solid and most intimately related to our bodies and to our everyday behaviour. But together with this sense of instability and this amazing efficacy of discontinuous, particular and local criticism, one in fact also discovers something that perhaps was not initially foreseen, something one might describe as precisely the inhibiting effect of global, totalitarian theories. It is not that these global theories have not provided nor continue to provide in a fairly consistent fashion useful tools for local research: Marxism and psychoanalysis are proofs of this. But I believe these tools have only been provided on the condition that the theoretical unity of these discourses was in some sense put in abeyance, or at least curtailed, divided, overthrown, caricatured, theatricalised, or what you will. In each case, the attempt to think in terms of a totality has in fact proved a hindrance to research.

MPP5-361 SYSTEMATIC INQUIRY SUBJUGATES CERTAIN FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.81-2.

By subjugated knowledges I mean two things: on the one hand, I am referring to the historical contents that have been buried and disguised in a functionalist coherence or formal systematisation. Concretely, it is not a semiology of the life of the asylum, it is not even a sociology of delinquency, that has made it possible to produce an effective criticism of the asylum and likewise of the prison, but rather the immediate emergence of historical contents. And this is simply because only the historical contents allow us to rediscover the ruptural effects of conflict and struggle that the order imposed by functionalist or systematising thought is designed to mask. Subjugated knowledges are thus those blocs of historical knowledge which were present but disguised within the body of functionalist and systematising theory and which criticism -- which obviously draws upon scholarship -- has been able to reveal.

MPP5-362 CRITICISM WORKS BEST THROUGH LOCALIZED KNOWLEDGE

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.82.

On the other hand, I believe that by subjugated knowledges one should understand something else, something which in a sense is altogether different, namely, a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity. I also believe that it is through the re-emergence of these low-ranking knowledges, these unqualified, even directly disqualified knowledges (such as that of the psychiatric patient, of the ill person, of the nurse, of the doctor -- parallel and marginal as they are to the knowledge of medicine -- that of the delinquent etc.), and which involve what I would call a popular knowledge (*le savoir des gens*) though it is far from being a general commonsense knowledge, but is on the contrary a particular, local, regional knowledge, a differential knowledge incapable of unanimity and which owes its force only to the harshness with which it is opposed by everything surrounding it -- that it is through the re-appearance of this knowledge, of these local popular knowledges, these disqualified knowledges, that criticism performs its work.

MPP5-363 KNOWLEDGE ISN'T SEPARATE FROM POWER

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM, 1994, p.68.

Moreover, our continuing to think of power "juridically" or "suppressively" is not merely a mistaken view of power; it is not merely an epistemological problem. It, like many epistemological concerns, is a political concern as well. If the poststructuralists have spent so much time focusing on the interaction between power and knowledge, it is because they recognize that much of what we say we know is not independent of the power relationships in which we are enmeshed and, in fact, is partially a product of those relationships. In this, they can be said to take seriously the Marxist concept of ideology, although they remove it from its subordination to the economic substructure. If the poststructuralists are right, then the suppressive assumption about power is a politically significant fact, as is the blindness the anarchists displayed by endorsing it.

MPP5-364 KNOWLEDGE AND POWER ARE ALWAYS INTEGRATED

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.52.

Modern humanism is therefore mistaken in drawing this line between knowledge and power. Knowledge and power are integrated with one another, and there is no point in dreaming of a time when knowledge will cease to depend on power; this is just a way of reviving humanism in a utopian guise. It is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power. 'Liberate scientific research from the demands of monopoly capitalism': maybe it's a good slogan, but it will never be more than a slogan.

MPP5-363a KNOWLEDGE AND POWER AND INEXTRICABLY ENTWINED

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.52.

The exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power. The university hierarchy is only the most visible, the most sclerotic and least dangerous form of this phenomenon. One has to be really naive to imagine that the effects of power linked to knowledge have their culmination in university hierarchies. Diffused, entrenched and dangerous, they operate in other places than in the person of the old professor.

MPP5-364a KNOWLEDGE HAS POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE BECAUSE IT IS LINKED WITH POWER

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM, 1994, p.91-2.

Genealogy is a historical account of its object, one that holds history to be contingent, dispersed, shifting, and without a goal. It is, in Deleuze's words, "an empirical and pluralist art." Moreover, intrinsic to the genealogical method is the process of what Deleuze calls "critique" and what Foucault calls a "curative science." To see why this is so, we must recall that knowledges too have their history, their series of appropriations and reappropriations. Practices of knowledge are also the objects and subjects of struggle and resistance, and thus it is a mistake to view knowledge as value-free or power-free. Knowledge, like other social practices, has its genealogical descent and emergence. This fact has formed the basis for much of contemporary poststructuralist analysis and intervention.

MPP5-365 FORMS OF TRUTH VARY ACROSS SOCIETIES

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.131.

Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.

MPP5-366 FOUCAULT SAW "TRUTH" AS MERELY A TOOL OF DOMINATION

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.101.

Thus at bottom Foucault follows Nietzsche in his view of reality (there is not truth, there are only interpretations) but not in his view of history. Or rather, what he borrows from Nietzsche, as far as history is concerned, is just a formal perspective: genealogy, namely, the problem of the emergence and descent of cultural phenomena. In genealogy, old cultural forms receive new functions, like the lazar houses transformed into asylums or the monastic cells converted into prison cages. Genealogy casts light on the pragmatism of history, on the human capacity to pour new wine into old cultural bottles. And it sees it all, of course, from the viewpoint of power, with truth debased to the role of an aid -- or a mask -- of domination.

MPP5-367 FOUCAULT SEES TRUTH AS EXPRESSING THE WILL TO POWER

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.108.

By searching for a genealogy of the modern subject, Foucault was automatically defining an angle where knowledge is enmeshed with power. Thus his pursuit of the modern subject through forms of knowledge as well as practices and discourses had to concentrate on what he calls power-knowledge (*pouvoir-savoir*), a Nietzschean perspective where all will to truth is already a will-to-power. And the more he delved into spheres of practical knowledge on the subject, the more he found technologies of the self waiting for analysis. At the end of the day, as Colin Gordon notes, Foucault developed a concept of power 'as able to take the form of a subjectification as well as of an objectification'. The self as a tool of power, a product of domination, rather than as an instrument of personal freedom -- this became Foucault's main theme after *Discipline and Punish*.

MPP5-368 FOUCAULT SEES SOCIAL SCIENCE AS DEVELOPING IN TANDEM WITH DISCIPLINARY SOCIETY

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.95.

Contending that disciplinary methods 'lowered the threshold of describable individuality' by substituting the calculable man for the memorable ancestor, he twice suggests that social science rose in league with the objectifying gaze of disciplinary, normalizing, examination. The cradle of the sciences of man, he surmises, is perhaps to be found in 'the "ignoble" archives' of clinical and penal observation; panoptic methods in the disciplinary society have made a science of man possible; 'knowable man (soul, individuality, consciousness, conduct, whatever it is called) is the object-effect of this analytical investment, of this domination-observation.'

MPP5-369 FOUCAULT SEES SCIENCE AS A TOOL OF DOMINATION

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.146.

There is, nevertheless, another aspect, no less decisive, which makes Foucault truly akin to Nietzsche. It deals not with their different historical temper (pessimist against optimist, lover or hater of the Enlightenment) but with their common epistemological stance. Of the three masters of suspicion, it was precisely Nietzsche who taught us to distrust reason and truth. Now Foucault is also deeply suspicious of truth-claims; to him, every knowledge, even science, is a tool of the will to power. Epistemes are merely species of the genus power apparatus; particular branches of knowledge obey strategies of domination, in fact 'invent' their objects so that man and earth can be better controlled. Reason is a technology of power; science, an instrument of domination.

MPP5-370 FOUCAULT'S APPROACH ATTEMPTS TO DISPLACE THE COERCIVE AUTHORITY OF SCIENCE

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.85.

By comparison, then, and in contrast to the various projects which aim to inscribe knowledges in the hierarchical order of power associated with science, a genealogy should be seen as a kind of attempt to emancipate historical knowledges from that subjection, to render them, that is, capable of opposition and of struggle against the coercion of a theoretical, unitary, formal and scientific discourse. It is based on a reactivation of local knowledges -- of minor knowledges, as Deleuze might call them -- in opposition to the scientific hierarchisation of knowledges and the effects intrinsic to their power: this, then, is the project of these disordered and fragmentary genealogies. If we were to characterise it in two terms, then 'archaeology' would be the appropriate methodology of this analysis of local discursivities, and 'genealogy' would be the tactics whereby, on the basis of the descriptions of these local discursivities, the subjected knowledges which were thus released would be brought into play.

MPP5-371 FOR FOUCAULT, THE ENLIGHTENMENT INCREASED SOCIAL CONTROL

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.90.

Foucault is clear: at bottom, humanitarianism, in the Enlightenment, counts less than will to power. Underneath its noble ideals of human emancipation, the Enlightenment defined new 'moral technologies' conducive to a degree of social control far greater than was the case in traditional societies. The penal reformers did not as much want to punish less as 'to punish better; to punish with an attenuated severity perhaps, but in order to punish with more universality and necessity; to insert the power to punish more deeply in the social body.'

MPP5-372 FOUCAULT SAW THE ENLIGHTENMENT AS TOTALITARIAN

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.90.

The standard image of the Enlightenment usually stresses its Utopian components. Foucault would agree. The only difference is that he has a different view of the Enlightenment's Utopia. To him, it was a totalitarian blueprint: Historians of ideas usually attribute the dream of a perfect society to the philosophers and jurists of the eighteenth century; but there was also a military dream of society; its fundamental reference was not to the state of nature, but to the meticulously subordinated cogs of a machine, not to the primal social contract, but to permanent coercions, not to fundamental rights, but to indefinitely progressive forms of training, not to general will but to automatic docility.

MPP5-373 ENLIGHTENMENT EGALITARIANISM LED TO THE DISCIPLINARY SOCIETY

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, 1977, p.222.

Historically, the process by which the bourgeoisie became in the course of the eighteenth century the politically dominant class was masked by the establishment of an explicit, coded and formally egalitarian juridical framework, made possible by the organization of a parliamentary, representative regime. But the development and generalization of disciplinary mechanisms constituted the other, dark side of these processes. The general juridical form that guaranteed a system of rights that were egalitarian in principle was supported by these tiny, everyday, physical mechanisms, by all those systems of micro-power that are essentially non-egalitarian and asymmetrical that we call the disciplines. And although, in a formal way, the representative regime makes it possible, directly or indirectly, with or without relays, for the will of all to form the fundamental authority of sovereignty, the disciplines provide, at the base, a guarantee of the submission of forces and bodies. The real, corporal disciplines constituted the foundation of the formal, juridical liberties. The contract may have been regarded as the ideal foundation of law and political power; panopticism constituted the technique, universally widespread, of coercion. It continued to work in depth on the juridical structures of society, in order to make the effective mechanisms of power function in opposition to the formal framework that it had acquired. The 'Enlightenment', which discovered the liberties, also invented the disciplines.

MPP5-374 DISCOURSES FORM SOCIAL REALITY

Colin Gordon, afterward to Michel Foucault, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.245.

This phenomenon consists in the singular emergence in Western thought during the past four centuries of discourses which construct programmes for the formation of a social reality. The existence of these discourses, whose object-domains are defined simultaneously as a target area for intervention and a functioning totality to be brought into existence, has a significance for historical analysis which prior to Foucault seems never to have been fully exploited. Our world does not follow a programme, but we live in a world of programmes, that is to say in a world traversed by the effects of discourses whose object (in both senses of the word) is the rendering rationally, transparent and programmable of the real.

MPP5-375 DISCOURSE IS A FORM OF SOCIAL POWER

Colin Gordon, afterward to Michel Foucault, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.244-5.

First, in his 1970 lecture *The Order of Discourse*, Foucault shows how the rules of formation of discourses are linked to the operation of a particular kind of social power. Discourses not only exhibit immanent principles of regularity, they are also bound by regulations enforced through social practices of appropriation, control and 'policing'. Discourse is a political commodity.

MPP5-376 POWER ARISES AT MULTIPLE LEVELS INCLUDING THE LINGUISTIC AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL
 Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.94-5.

The kind of politics that genealogy yields is a politics that is more local and diffuse than the large-scale politics that is better suited to grand narratives. Genealogy promotes resistance at the diffuse points at which practices occur, intersect, and give rise to oppressive relations. It struggles not only on the economic or state levels, but on the epistemological, psychological, linguistic, sexual, religious, psychoanalytic, ethical, informational (etc.) levels as well. It struggles on these levels not because multiple struggles will create a society without the centralization of power, but because power is not centralized, because across the surface of those levels are the sites at which power arises.

MPP5-377 POSTSTRUCTURALIST POLITICS IS ESSENTIALLY ANARCHISTIC

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.3-4.

The purpose of this essay is to sketch the framework of an alternative political philosophy, one that differs from its dominant predecessors, especially free-market liberalism and Marxism, not only in the vision it provides but also in the level and style of intervention it advocates. The framework is drawn from a tradition of political philosophy that is current but has not yet received attention precisely as a framework: namely, French poststructuralist thought. In this framework I include, for reasons that will become clear, the writings primarily of Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Jean-Francois Lyotard. Poststructuralist political thought has offered, though not precisely in these terms, an alternative vision of political intervention that articulates the tension between the world as it is and the world as it could be, particularly since the collapse of the Marxist project. That the framework it provides has not been much discussed as such is in part owing to its nature: it avoids global discourse in favor of concrete, limited analyses. In poststructuralism, macropolitics gives way to micropolitics. It might seem at first glance, then, that the attempt to situate those analyses within a more general philosophical framework would constitute a betrayal of the poststructuralist project. Later we will see how, by grafting poststructuralism onto a tradition in whose light it has not been grasped -- the anarchist tradition -- it is possible to articulate a poststructuralist framework without betraying its fundamental micropolitical commitments.

MPP5-378 FOUCAULT WAS AN ANARCHIST

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.154.

And libertarianism, indeed, is the best label for Foucault's outlook as a social theorist. More precisely, he was (though he didn't use the word) a modern anarchist; no wonder of all the master-thinkers once associated with structuralism it was he who remained closest to the spirit of '68.

MPP5-379 FOUCAULT REJECTED INSTITUTIONS

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.155.

Finally, and in still closer agreement with the purest anarchist tradition, Foucault was adamant in his distrust of institutions, however revolutionary they were meant to be. His debate with French Maoists on 'popular justice' printed in *Les Temps Modernes* in 1972, is exemplary in this connection. The 'Maos', who were by then supported by Sartre, wanted to establish revolutionary tribunals. Foucault objected that revolutionary justice should dispense with courts altogether, since tribunals as such are a bourgeois institution, or rather, 'bourgeois' because they are an institution.

MPP5-380 FOUCAULT REJECTED POLITICS

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.117-18.

The truth is, Foucault did not care much for the politics of liberty because he thought politics as such no longer mattered. Politics, in his view, was the child of Revolution. Speaking to *Le Nouvel Observateur* in 1977, he suggested that all revolution tends to deteriorate into Stalinism because it tends to be confiscated by the revolutionary state. Therefore revolutions have become highly undesirable. It follows that we are now living 'the end of politics'. For if it is true that genuine politics is an activity made possible by revolution, and revolution is no longer on, then politics must go. Class struggle -- which Foucault had no intention of dropping -- must learn to circumvent the dead weight of politics.

MPP5-381 POLITICAL POWER IS INEVITABLY A FORM OF VIOLENCE

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.90.

This reversal of Clausewitz's assertion that war is politics continued by other means has a triple significance: in the first place, it implies that the relations of power that function in a society such as ours essentially rest upon a definite relation of forces that is established at a determinate, historically specifiable moment, in war and by war. Furthermore, if it is true that political power puts an end to war, that it installs, or tries to install, the reign of peace in civil society, this by no means implies that it suspends the effects of war or neutralises the disequilibrium revealed in the final battle. The role of political power, on this hypothesis, is perpetually to reinscribe this relation through a form of unspoken warfare; to re-inscribe it in social institutions, in economic inequalities, in language, in the bodies themselves of each and everyone of us.

MPP5-382 POLITICS IS THE CONTINUATION OF WAR

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY, VOLUME ONE*, 1978, p.93.

Should we turn the expression around, then, and say that politics is war pursued by other means? If we still wish to maintain a separation between war and politics, perhaps we should postulate rather that this multiplicity of force relations can be coded -- in part but never totally -- either in the form of "war," or in the form of "politics"; this would imply two different strategies (but the one always liable to switch into the other) for integrating these unbalanced, heterogeneous, unstable, and tense force relations.

MPP5-383 FOUCAULT APPROPRIATELY ABOLISHES THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.8.

Unlike Rorty, Foucault does not stabilize (or authorize) a locus of power. His thesis is rather that "power is exercised from innumerable points." Instead of a focal point of sovereignty, he postulates an endless network of power relations. Thus Foucault can be commended as insisting -- as Rorty does not -- on the ubiquitous nature of power (and hence of politics). Such a thesis abolishes the viability of distinguishing between the private and the public. It recognizes that childbearing, household concerns, sex, desires, needs, fashion, education -- in short, all things traditionally understood as belonging to the realm of the private -- have important political dimensions, since their genealogy is rooted in networks of power. For this reason Foucault's analysis of politics is most frequently adopted as a methodological tool for oppositional politics and as such is seminal to my investigation into the viability of such a politics. Furthermore, the thesis of the ubiquitous nature of power must be the end result of any consistent postmodern or poststructuralist politics and, I will argue, that part of it which must be saved whatever else may turn out to be untenable in the postmodern or poststructuralist position.

MPP5-384 "OBJECTIVE" IDEAS OF JUSTICE UNDERMINE POPULAR JUSTICE

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.8-9.

Now this idea" that there can be people who are neutral in relation to the two parties, that they can make judgments about them on the basis of ideas of justice which have absolute validity, and that their decisions must be acted upon, I believe that all this is far removed from and quite foreign to the very idea of popular justice. In the case of popular justice you do not have three elements, you have the masses and their enemies. Furthermore, the masses, when they perceive somebody to be an enemy, when they decide to punish this enemy -- or to re-educate him -- do not rely on an abstract universal idea of justice, they rely only on their own experience, that of the injuries they have suffered, that of the way in which they have been wronged, in which they have been oppressed; and finally, their decision is not an authoritative one, that is, they are not backed up by a state apparatus which has the power to enforce their decisions, they purely and simply carry them out. Therefore I hold firmly to the view that the organisation of courts, at least in the West, is necessarily alien to the practice of popular justice.

MPP5-385 THE COURT SYSTEM OPPRESSES THE WORKING CLASS

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.29-30.

On the other hand, it seems to me that the bourgeois judicial system has always operated to increase oppositions between the proletariat and the non-proletarianised people. This is the reason that it is a bad instrument, not because it is old. The very form of the court contains the statement to the two parties, 'Before the proceedings your case is neither just nor unjust. It will only be so on the day when I pronounce it so, because I will have consulted the law or the canons of eternal equity'. This is the very essence of the court, and it is in complete contradiction with the point of view of popular justice.

MPP5-386 THE JUDICIAL AND PENAL APPARATUS MUST BE TOTALLY REJECTED

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.16.

At first sight these are at least some of the ways in which the penal system operates as an anti-seditious system, as a variety of ways of creating antagonism between the proletarianised and the non-proletarianised people, and thereby introducing a contradiction which is now firmly rooted. This is why the revolution can only take place via the radical elimination of the judicial apparatus, and anything which could reintroduce the penal apparatus, anything which could reintroduce its ideology and enable this ideology to surreptitiously creep back into popular practices, must be banished. This is why the court, an exemplary form of this judicial system, seems to me to be a possible location for the reintroduction of the ideology of the penal system into popular practice. This is why I think that one should not make use of such a model.

MPP5-387 THE DISCOURSE OF "RIGHT" PRODUCES RELATIONS OF DOMINATION

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.95-6.

My general project over the past few years has been, in essence, to reverse the mode of analysis followed by the entire discourse of right from the time of the Middle Ages. My aim, therefore, was to invert it, to give due weight, that is, to the fact of domination, to expose both its latent nature and its brutality. I then wanted to show not only how right is, in a general way, the instrument of this domination which scarcely needs saying -- but also to show the extent to which, and the forms in which, right (not simply the laws but the whole complex of apparatuses, institutions and regulations responsible for their application) transmits and puts in motion relations that are not relations of sovereignty, but of domination. Moreover, in speaking of domination I do not have in mind that solid and global kind of domination that one person exercises over others, or one group over another, but the manifold forms of domination that can be exercised within society. Not the domination of the King in his central position, therefore, but that of his subjects in their mutual relations: not the uniform edifice of sovereignty, but the multiple forms of subjugation that have a place and function within the social organism.

MPP5-388 THE CONCEPT OF "RIGHT" MASKS DOMINATION

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.95.

When we say that sovereignty is the central problem of right in Western societies, what we mean basically is that the essential function of the discourse and techniques of right has been to efface the domination intrinsic to power in order to present the latter at the level of appearance under two different aspects: on the one hand, as the legitimate rights of sovereignty, and on the other, as the legal obligation to obey it. The system of right is centred entirely upon the King, and it is therefore designed to eliminate the fact of domination and its consequences.

MPP5-389 THE EFFECTS OF POWER WERE SIMILAR IN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE WEST

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.73.

In Soviet society one has the example of a State apparatus which has changed hands, yet leaves social hierarchies, family life, sexuality and the body more or less as they were in capitalist society. Do you imagine the mechanisms of power that operate between technicians, foremen and workers are that much different here and in the Soviet Union?

MPP5-390 THE GULAG UNDERMINES MARXISM

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.135.

Refusing to question the Gulag on the basis of the texts of Marx or Lenin or to ask oneself how, through what error, deviation, misunderstanding or distortion of speculation or practice, their theory could have been betrayed to such a degree. On the contrary, it means questioning all these theoretical texts, however old, from the standpoint of the reality of the Gulag. Rather than of searching in those texts for a condemnation in advance of the Gulag, it is a matter of asking what in those texts could have made the Gulag possible, what might even now continue to justify it, and what makes it intolerable truth still accepted today. The Gulag question must be posed not in terms of error (reduction of the problem to one of theory), but in terms of reality.

MPP5-391 THE GULAG IMPUGNS EVEN "IDEAL", SOCIALISM

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.136.

Refusing to adopt for the critique of the Gulag a law or principle of selection internal to our own discourse or dream. By this I mean giving up the politics of inverted commas, not attempting to evade the problem by putting inverted commas, whether damning or ironic, round Soviet socialism in order to protect the good, true socialism -- with no inverted commas -- which alone can provide a legitimate standpoint for a politically valid critique of the Gulag. Actually the only socialism which deserves these scornful scare-quotes is the one which leads the dreamy life of ideality in our heads. We must open our eyes on the contrary to what enables people there, on the spot, to resist the Gulag, what makes it intolerable for them, and what can give the people of the anti-Gulag the courage to stand up and die in order to be able to utter a word or a poem.

MPP5-392 FOUCAULT DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN DIFFERENT KINDS OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.136-7.

Rejecting the universalising dissolution of the problem into the 'denunciation' of every possible form of internment. The Gulag is not a question to be posed for any and every country. It has to be posed for every socialist country, insofar as none of these since 1917 has managed to function without a more-or-less developed Gulag system.

MPP5-393 FOUCAULT REJECTED REFORM

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.118.

In similar vein, Foucault's 'unpolitics' was a post-revolutionary radical activism which approved of the 'specific struggles against particularized power' of 'women, prisoners, conscripted soldiers, hospital patients and homosexuals'. At the same time, however, there was no question for him of being or becoming reformist: reform he held a 'stupid and hypocritical' notion. One wonders why. The closest I came to an answer was when I discovered how Foucault would like to see his works function: 'I would like my books to be [...] Molotov cocktails, or minefields; I would like them to self-destruct after use, like fireworks.

MPP5-394 EXCESSIVE FEAR OF REFORMISM SHOULD BE AVOIDED

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.145.

It seems to me that this whole intimidation with the bogey of reform is linked to the lack of a strategic analysis appropriate to political struggle, to struggles in the field of political power. The role for theory today seems to me to be just this: not to formulate the global systematic theory which holds everything in place, but to analyse the specificity of mechanisms of power, to locate the connections and extensions, to build little by little a strategic knowledge (savoir). If 'the traditional parties have re-established their hegemony over the Left', and over the diverse forms of struggle which had not originally been under their control, one reason among many for this was that only a profoundly inadequate logic was available to these struggles for the analysis of their unfolding and their effects.

MPP5-395 COMPLETE REJECTION OF REFORM IS STRATEGICALLY FLAWED

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.143.

It is necessary to make a distinction between critique of reformism as a political practice and the critique of a political practice on the grounds that it may give rise to a reform. This latter form of critique is frequent in left-wing groups and its employment is part of the mechanisms of micro-terrorism by which they have often operated. It amounts to saying, 'Beware: however ideally radical your intentions may be, your action is so localised and your objectives so isolated that at this particular spot the adversary will be able to handle the situation, to yield if necessary without in any way compromising his global position; even better, this will allow him to locate the sites of necessary transformation; and so you will have been recuperated'. The anathema is pronounced. Now it seems to me that this critique rests on two errors: First, there is a misunderstanding of the strategic form that processes of struggle take.

MPP5-396 LOCALIZED EFFORTS ARE GOOD EVEN IF THEY DON'T PRODUCE REVOLUTIONARY BREAKTHROUGH

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.144.

The phobia of the adversary's reformist riposte is also linked with second error. This is the privilege accorded to what is solemnly termed the 'theory' of the weakest link. A local attack is considered to have sense and legitimacy only when directed at the element which, if broken, will allow the total breach of the chain. That is, it must be a local action but one which, through the choice of its site, will act radically on the whole. Here again we should ask why this thesis has had such success in the twentieth century, and why it has been erected into a theory. Certainly it rendered thinkable the event that Marxism had failed to foresee: the revolution in Russia. But in general it must be recognised that we are dealing here not with a dialectical, but a strategic proposition -- and a very elementary one at that. It provided the acceptable minimum of strategy for a mode of thinking ruled by the dialectic, and has remained closely linked to dialectic because it expressed the possibility for a local situation to count as the contradiction of the whole. Hence the solemnity with which this 'Leninist' thesis was erected into a 'theory' -one which is barely on a level with the preliminary training given to a sub-lieutenant in the reserves. And it's in the name of this thesis that every local action is terrorised with the following dilemma: either you attack on a local level, but you must be sure that it's at the weakest link, the one whose breakage will demolish the whole structure; or else, since the whole structure fails to collapse, the link wasn't the weakest one, the adversary needed only to re-organise his front, and a reform has reabsorbed your attack.

MPP5-397 FOUCAULT REJECTED THE INDICTMENT OF REFORMISM

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.55.

This is not to deny the possibility of revolutionary changes, but to admit that they are changes of degree rather than of kind -- or, better, that they are changes of kind inasmuch as they are certain kinds of changes of degree. Michel Foucault recognized this point as well: It seems to me that this whole intimidation with the bogey of reform is linked to the lack of a strategic analysis [in our terms, a tactical analysis] appropriate to political struggle, to struggles in the field of political power. The role for theory today seems to me to be just this: not to formulate the global systematic theory which holds everything in place, but to analyse the specificity of mechanisms of power, to locate the connections and extensions, to build little by little a strategic [i.e., tactical] knowledge.

MPP5-398 PUNISHMENT IS A FORM OF REVENGE

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, 1977, p.48.

The right to punish, therefore, is an aspect of the sovereign's right to make war on his enemies: to punish belongs to 'that absolute power of life and death which Roman law calls *merum imperium*, a right by virtue of which the prince sees that his law is respected by ordering the punishment of crime' (Muyart de Vouglans, xxxiv). But punishment is also a way of exacting retribution that is both personal and public, since the physico-political force of the sovereign is in a sense present in the law: 'One sees by the very definition of the law that it tends not only to prohibit, but also to avenge contempt for its authority by the punishment of those who violate its prohibitions' (Muyart de Vouglans, xxxiv). In the execution of the most ordinary penalty, in the most punctilious respect of legal forms, reign the active forces of revenge.

MPP5-399 THE TRUTH-POWER RELATIONSHIP IS KEY TO ALL FORMS OF PUNISHMENT

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, 1977, p.55.

If torture was so strongly embedded in legal practice, it was because it revealed truth and showed the operation of power. It assured the articulation of the written on the oral, the secret on the public, the procedure of investigation on the operation of the confession; it made it possible to reproduce the crime on the visible body of the criminal; in the same horror, the crime had to be manifested and annulled. It also made the body of the condemned man the place where the vengeance of the sovereign was applied, the anchoring point for a manifestation of power, an opportunity of affirming the dissymmetry of forces. We shall see later that the truth-power relation remains at the heart of all mechanisms of punishment and that it is still to be found in contemporary penal practice -- but in a quite different form and with very different effects.

MPP5-400 FOUCAULT SEES THE PRISON AS PRODUCING DELINQUENCY

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.95.

Foucault's endeavour, in his final chapter on the birth of modern prison (i.e., prison in the first half of the nineteenth century), is to look at the penitentiary from the vantage point of this socio-epistemology of discipline. Foucault invites us to pause and think of the monotonous criticisms addressed at the prison's failure to deter criminality and correct criminals. Should we not, asks he, reverse the problem? Questions which remain unanswered for so long generally tend to be the wrong kind of question. So perhaps the prison did not fall, after all: only, it succeeded where one did not search for its success. Prisons did not so much fail to eliminate crime as succeeded in producing delinquency, and not just in the empirical sense of fostering so many *societes sceleris* when rehabilitation was expected, but precisely in the perspective of power/knowledge: prisons encapsulate punitive systems which, in Foucault's claim, are less intended to eliminate offences than 'to distinguish them, to distribute them, to use them', and in so doing 'tend to assimilate the transgression of the laws in a general tactics of subjection'.

MPP5-401 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS AN EXERCISE IN TERROR

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, 1977, p.49.

Although redress of the private injury occasioned by the offence must be proportionate, although the sentence must be equitable, the punishment is carried out in such a way as to give a spectacle not of measure, but of imbalance and excess; in this liturgy of punishment, there must be an emphatic affirmation of power and of its intrinsic superiority. And this superiority is not simply that of right, but that of the physical strength of the sovereign beating down upon the body of his adversary and mastering it: by breaking the law, the offender has touched the very person of the prince; and it is the prince -- or at least those to whom he has delegated his force -- who seizes upon the body of the condemned man and displays it marked, beaten, broken. The ceremony of punishment, then, is an exercise of 'terror'.

MPP5-402 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS A POLITICAL RITUAL DESIGNED TO DISPLAY POWER

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, 1977, p.47.

The public execution is to be understood not only as a judicial, but also as a political ritual. It belongs, even in minor cases, to the ceremonies by which power is manifested.

MPP5-403 EXECUTIONS WERE DESIGNED TO TERRORIZE THE PUBLIC

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, 1977, p.57-8.

In the ceremonies of the public execution, the main character was the people, whose real and immediate presence was required for the performance. An execution that was known to be taking place, but which did so in secret, would scarcely have had any meaning. The aim was to make an example, not only by making people aware that the slightest offence was likely to be punished, but by arousing feelings of terror by the spectacle of power letting its anger fall upon the guilty person: 'In criminal matters, the most difficult point is the imposition of the penalty: it is the aim and the end of the procedure, and its only fruit, by example and terror, when it is well applied to the guilty person' (Bruneau, unnumbered preface to the first part).

MPP5-404 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS BASED ON DEVALUATION OF LIFE

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, 1977, p.54-5.

There can be no doubt that the existence of public tortures and executions were connected with something quite other than this internal organization. Rusche and Kirchheimer are right to see it as the effect of a system of production in which labour power, and therefore the human body, has neither the utility nor the commercial value that are conferred on them in an economy of an industrial type. Moreover, this 'contempt' for the body is certainly related to a general attitude to death; and, in such an attitude, one can detect not only the values proper to Christianity, but a demographical, in a sense biological, situation: the ravages of disease and hunger, the periodic massacres of the epidemics, the formidable child mortality rate, the precariousness of the bio-economic balances -- all this made death familiar and gave rise to rituals intended to integrate it, to make it acceptable and to give a meaning to its permanent aggression.

MPP5-405 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT WAS AN EXPRESSION OF INFINITE VENGEANCE

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, 1977, p.53-4.

We must regard the public execution, as it was still ritualized in the eighteenth century, as a political operation. It was logically inscribed in a system of punishment, in which the sovereign, directly or indirectly, demanded, decided and carried out punishments, in so far as it was he who, through the law, had been injured by the crime. In every offence there was a *crimen majestatis* and in the least criminal a potential regicide. And the regicide, in turn, was neither more nor less, than the total, absolute criminal since, instead of attacking, like any offender, a particular decision or wish of the sovereign power, he attacked the very principle and physical person of the prince. The ideal punishment of the regicide had to constitute the summum of all possible tortures. It would be an expression of infinite vengeance: French law, in any case, made provisions for no fixed penalties for this sort of monstrosity.

MPP5-406 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT WAS AN ASSERTION OF SOVEREIGN POWER

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, 1977, p.50.

As a ritual of armed law, in which the prince showed himself, indissociably, both as head of justice and head of war, the public execution had two aspects: one of victory the other of struggle. It brought to a solemn end a war, the outcome of which was decided in advance, between the criminal and the sovereign; it had to manifest the disproportion of power of the sovereign over those whom he had reduced to impotence. The dissymmetry, the irreversible imbalance of forces were an essential element in the public execution. A body effaced, reduced to dust and thrown to the winds, a body destroyed piece by piece by the infinite power of the sovereign constituted not only the ideal, but the real limit of punishment.

MPP5-407 PUBLIC EXECUTION WAS A DISPLAY OF SOVEREIGN POWER

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, 1977, p.50.

Now, this meticulous ceremonial was not only legal but quite explicitly military. The justice of the king was shown to be an armed justice. The sword that punished the guilty was also the sword that destroyed enemies. A whole military machine surrounded the scaffold: cavalry of the watch, archers, guardsmen, soldiers. This was intended, of course, to prevent any escape or show of force; it was also to prevent any outburst of sympathy or anger on the part of the people, any attempt to save the condemned or to have them immediately put to death; but it was also a reminder that every crime constituted as it were a rebellion against the law and that the criminal was an enemy of the prince. All these reasons whether a matter of precaution in particular circumstances or a functional element in the performance of the ritual -- made the public execution more than an act of justice; it was a manifestation of force; or rather, it was justice as the physical, material and awesome force of the sovereign deployed there. The ceremony of the public torture and execution displayed for all to see the power relation that gave his force to the law.

MPP5-408 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT REINFORCES THE POWER OF THE SOVEREIGN

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH*, 1977, p.49.

The public execution did not re-establish justice; it reactivated power. In the seventeenth century, and even in the early eighteenth century, it was not, therefore, with all its theatre of terror, a lingering hang-over from an earlier age. Its ruthlessness, its spectacle, its physical violence, its unbalanced play of forces, its meticulous ceremonial, its entire apparatus were inscribed in the political functioning of the penal system.

MPP5-409 PUNISHMENT IS AN EXPRESSION OF POWER
Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH, 1977, p.57.

The fact that the crime and the punishment were related and bound up in the form of atrocity was not the result of some obscurely accepted law of retaliation. It was the effect, in the rites of punishment, of a certain mechanism of power: of a power that not only did not hesitate to exert itself directly on bodies, but was exalted and strengthened by its visible manifestations; of a power that asserted itself as an armed power whose functions of maintaining order were not entirely unconnected with the functions of war; of a power that presented rules and obligations as personal bonds, a breach of which constituted an offence and called for vengeance; of a power for which disobedience was an act of hostility, the first sign of rebellion, which is not in principle different from civil war; of a power that had to demonstrate not why it enforced its laws, but who were its enemies, and what unleashing of force threatened them; of a power which, in the absence of continual supervision, sought a renewal of its effect in the spectacle of its individual manifestations; of a power that was recharged in the ritual display of its reality as 'super-power'.

MPP5-410 PENAL REFORM INCREASED THE EXTENT OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH, 1977, p.77-8.

Was this a general change of attitude, a 'change that belongs to the domain of the spirit and the subconscious' (the expression is Mogenssen's)? Perhaps, but more certainly and more immediately it was an effort to adjust the mechanisms of power that frame the everyday lives of individuals; an adaptation and a refinement of the machinery that assumes responsibility for and places under surveillance their everyday behaviour, their identity, their activity, their apparently unimportant gestures; another policy for that multiplicity of bodies and forces that constitutes a population. What was emerging no doubt was not so much a new respect for the humanity of the condemned -- torture was still frequent in the execution of even minor criminals -- as a tendency towards a more finely tuned justice, towards a closer penal mapping of the social body. Following a circular process, the threshold of the passage to violent crimes rises, intolerance to economic offences increases, controls become more thorough, penal interventions at once more premature and more numerous.

MPP5-411 PENAL REFORM INCREASED SOCIAL CONTROL

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH, 1977, p.81-2.

Throughout the eighteenth century, inside and outside the legal apparatus, in both everyday penal practice and the criticism of institutions, one sees the emergence of a new strategy for the exercise of the power to punish. And 'reform', in the strict sense, as it was formulated in the theories of law or as it was outlined in the various projects, was the political or philosophical resumption of this strategy, with its primary objectives: to make of the punishment and repression of illegalities a regular function, coextensive with society; not to punish less, but to punish better; to punish with an attenuated severity perhaps, but in order to punish with more universality and necessity; to insert the power to punish more deeply into the social body.

MPP5-412 REDUCED SEVERITY OF PUNISHMENT HAS INCREASED ITS EXTENSIVENESS

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH, 1977, p.75.

Yet this reform must be situated in a process that historians have recently uncovered through the study of legal archives: the relaxation of penalty in the eighteenth century or, to be more precise, the double movement by which, during this period, crimes seemed to lose their violence, while punishments, reciprocally, lost some of their intensity, but at the cost of greater intervention.

MPP5-413 LESS SEVERE PUNISHMENTS INCREASED THE NEED FOR SURVEILLANCE

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH, 1977, p.96.

Nothing so weakens the machinery of the law than the hope of going unpunished; how could one establish in the minds of the public a strict link between the offence and a penalty if it were affected by a certain coefficient of improbability? Would it not be necessary to make the penalty the more to be feared in its violence as it is less to be feared in its uncertainty? Rather than imitate the old system in this way and be 'more severe, one must be more vigilant'. Hence the idea that the machinery of justice must be duplicated by an organ of surveillance that would work side by side with it, and which would make it possible either to prevent crimes, or, if committed, to arrest their authors; police and justice must work together as two complementary actions of the same process -- the police assuring 'the action of society on each individual', justice 'the rights of individuals against society.'

MPP5-414 FOUCAULT'S THEORY OF POWER DESCRIBED

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.72.

Foucault offers an analytic of the operation of power in the modern period. His most sustained treatment of the general characteristics of that operation is in the first volume of his *History of Sexuality*, where he advances four "propositions" on modern power: 1) that "it is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations"; 2) that "relations of power are not in a position of exteriority to other types of relationships"; that 3) "power comes from below; that is, there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations, and serving as a general matrix"; and 4) that "power relations are both intentional and nonsubjective." These propositions form the basis of what could be called an "anarchist" view of power.

MPP5-415 POWER IS PERMANENT AND OMNIPRESENT

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY, VOLUME ONE*, 1978, p.93.

The omnipresence of power: not because it has the privilege of consolidating everything under its invincible unity, but because it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another. Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere. And "Power," insofar as it is permanent, repetitious, inert, and self-reproducing, is simply the over-all effect that emerges from all these mobilities, the concatenation that rests on each of them and seeks in turn to arrest their movement. One needs to be nominalistic, no doubt: power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategic situation in a particular society.

MPP5-416 POWER PERPETUALLY CIRCULATES AMONG INDIVIDUALS

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.98.

Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application.

MPP5-417 POWER IS A MULTIPLICITY OF FORCE RELATIONS

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY, VOLUME ONE*, 1978, p.92-3.

It seems to me that power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, strengthens, or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another; and lastly, as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies.

MPP5-418 POWER PERVADES ALL KINDS OF RELATIONSHIPS

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY, VOLUME ONE*, 1978, p.94.

Relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relationships (economic processes, knowledge relationships, sexual relations), but are immanent in the latter; they are the immediate effects of the divisions, inequalities, and disequilibria which occur in the latter, and conversely they are the internal conditions of these differentiations; relations of power are not in superstructural positions, with merely a role of prohibition or accompaniment; they have a directly productive role, wherever they come into play.

MPP5-419 EVERY FORM OF FORCE IS A RELATION OF POWER

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.189.

If it is true that the set of relations of force in a given society constitutes the domain of the political, and that a politics is a more-or-less global strategy for co-ordinating and directing those relations, then I believe one can answer your questions in the following way: the political is not something which determines in the last analysis (or over-determines) relations that are elementary and by nature 'neutral'. Every relation of force implies at each moment a relation of power (which is in a sense its momentary expression) and every power relation makes a reference, as its effect but also as its condition of possibility, to a political field of which it forms a part.

MPP5-420 POWER IS A HIERARCHICAL CLUSTER OF RELATIONS

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.198.

Power in the substantive sense, 'le' pouvoir, doesn't exist. What I mean is this. The idea that there is either located at -- or emanating from -- a given point something which is a 'power' seems to me to be based on a misguided analysis, one which at all events fails to account for a considerable number of phenomena. In reality power means relations, a more-or-less organised, hierarchical, co-ordinated cluster of relations.

MPP5-421 SINCE EVERYONE POSSESSES POWER, THE POWER OF THE STATE SHOULDN'T BE EXAGGERATED
 Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.72.

The Panoptic system was not so much confiscated by the state apparatuses, rather it was these apparatuses which rested on the basis of small-scale, regional, dispersed Panoptisms. In consequence one cannot confine oneself to analysing the State apparatus alone if one wants to grasp the mechanisms of power in their detail and complexity. There is a sort of schematism that needs to be avoided here -- and which incidentally is not to be found in Marx -- that consists of locating power in the State apparatus, making this into the major, privileged, capital and almost unique instrument of the power of one class over another. In reality, power in its exercise goes much further, passes through much finer channels, and is much more ambiguous, since each individual has at his disposal a certain power, and for that very reason can also act as the vehicle for transmitting a wider power. The reproduction of the relations of production is not the only function served by power. The systems of domination and the circuits of exploitation certainly interact, intersect and support each other, but they do not coincide.

MPP5-422 POWER ISN'T UNIQUELY IMBUED IN SOVEREIGNTY AND LAW

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY, VOLUME ONE, 1978, p.97.

It is in this sphere of force relations that we must try to analyze the mechanisms of power. In this way we will escape from the system of Law-and-Sovereign which has captivated political thought for such a long time. And if it is true that Machiavelli was among the few -- and this no doubt was the scandal of his "cynicism" -- who conceived the power of the Prince in terms of force relationships, perhaps we need to go one step further, do without the persona of the Prince, and decipher power mechanisms on the basis of a strategy that is immanent in force relationships.

MPP5-423 POWER ISN'T A SOVEREIGN RELATIONSHIP
 Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY, VOLUME ONE, 1978, p.94.

Power comes from below; that is, there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations, and serving as a general matrix -- no such duality extending from the top down and reacting on more and more limited groups to the very depths of the social body. One must suppose rather that the manifold relationships of force that take shape and come into play in the machinery of production, in families, limited groups, and institutions, are the basis for wide-ranging effects of cleavage that run through the social body as a whole. These then form a general line of force that traverses the local oppositions and links them together; to be sure, they also bring about redistributions, realignments, homogenizations, serial arrangements, and convergences of the force relations. Major dominations are the hegemonic effects that are sustained by all these confrontations.

MPP5-424 MANY FORMS OF POWER TRANSCEND SOVEREIGNTY

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.187.

As against this privileging of sovereign power, I wanted to show the value of an analysis which followed a different course. Between every point of a social body, between a man and a woman, between the members of a family, between a master and his pupil, between every one who knows and every one who does not, there exist relations of power which are not purely and simply a projection of the sovereign's great power over the individual; they are rather the concrete, changing soil in which the sovereign's power is grounded, the conditions which make it possible for it to function.

MPP5-425 THE STATE IS IMPORTANT BUT NOT THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF POWER

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.60.

I don't claim at all that the State apparatus is unimportant, but it seems to me that among all the conditions for avoiding a repetition of the Soviet experience and preventing the revolutionary process from running into the ground, one of the first things that has to be understood is that power isn't localised in the State apparatus and that nothing in society will be changed if the mechanisms of power that function outside, below and alongside the State apparatuses, on a much more minute and everyday level, are not also changed.

MPP5-426 FOUCAULT DOESN'T DENY THE IMPORTANCE OF STATE POWER

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM, 1994, p.100.

Foucault puts the practical point this way: "I do not mean to minimise the importance and effectiveness of State power. I simply feel that excessive insistence on its playing an exclusive role leads to the risk of overlooking all the mechanisms which don't pass directly via the State apparatus, yet often sustain the State more effectively than its own institutions, enlarging and maximising its effectiveness. In Soviet society one has the example of a State apparatus which has changed hands, yet leaves social hierarchies, family life, sexuality, and the body more or less as they were in capitalist society."

MPP5-427 STATE POWER IS IMPORTANT AND EFFECTIVE

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.72-3.

The administrative monarchy of Louis XIV and Louis XV, intensely centralised as it was, certainly acted as an initial disciplinary model. As you know, the police was invented in Louis XV's France. I do not mean in any way to minimise the importance and effectiveness of State power. I simply feel that excessive insistence on its playing an exclusive role leads to the risk of overlooking all the mechanisms and effects of power which don't pass directly via the State apparatus, yet often sustain the State more effectively than its own institutions, enlarging and maximising its effectiveness.

MPP5-428 LAW IS ONE BUT NOT THE ONLY FORM OF POWER

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.141.

Law is neither the truth of power nor its alibi. It is an instrument of power which is at once complex and partial. The form of law with its effects of prohibition needs to be resituated among a number of other, non-judicial mechanisms. Thus the penal system should not be analysed purely and simply as an apparatus of prohibition and repression of one class by another, nor as an alibi for the lawless violence of the ruling class. The penal system makes possible a mode of political and economic management which exploits the difference between legality and illegalities. The same holds true for sexuality: prohibition is certainly not the principal form of the investment of sexuality by power.

MPP5-429 JURIDICAL POWER EXISTS, EVEN THOUGH IT IS NON-EXHAUSTIVE

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM, 1994, p.67-8.

"[I]f it is true that the juridical system was useful for representing, albeit in a nonexhaustive way, a power that was centered primarily around deduction and death, it is utterly incongruous with the new methods of power whose operation is not ensured by right but by technique, not by law but by normalization, not by punishment but by control, methods that are employed at all levels and in forms that go beyond the state and its apparatus." That power is always a matter of constraints upon action does not imply that we must define those constraints in terms of restraints. The "juridico-discursive" model of power, as Foucault calls it, mistakenly cites the dominant mode of the operation of power several centuries ago as the model for all operations of power.

MPP5-430 THE JURIDICAL VIEW OF POWER LED TO ITS CONCENTRATION

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE, 1980, p.103.

This solid, historical body of fact is the juridical-political theory of sovereignty of which I spoke a moment ago, a theory which has had four roles to play. In the first place, it has been used to refer to a mechanism of power that was effective under the feudal monarchy. In the second place, it has served as instrument and even as justification for the construction of the large scale administrative monarchies. Again, from the time of the sixteenth century and more than ever from the seventeenth century onwards, but already at the time of the wars of religion, the theory of sovereignty has been a weapon which has circulated from one camp to another, which has been utilised in one sense or another, either to limit or else to re-inforce royal power: we find it among Catholic monarchists and Protestant anti-monarchists, among Protestant and more-or-less liberal monarchists, but also among Catholic partisans of regicide or dynastic transformation. It functions both in the hands of aristocrats and in the hands of parliamentarians.

MPP5-431 BENEATH THE RULE OF LAW IS A VAST SYSTEM OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH, 1977, p.223.

And, although the universal juridicism of modern society seems to fix limits on the exercise of power, its universally widespread panopticism enables it to operate, on the underside of the law, a machinery that is both immense and minute, which supports, reinforces, multiplies the asymmetry of power and undermines the limits that are traced around the law. The minute disciplines, the panopticism of every day may well be below the level of emergence of the great apparatuses and the great political struggles. But, in the genealogy of modern society, they have been, with the class domination that traverses it, the political counterpart of the juridical norms according to which power was redistributed. Hence, no doubt, the importance that has been given for so long to the small techniques of discipline, to those apparently insignificant tricks that it has invented, and even to those 'sciences' that give it a respectable face; hence the fear of abandoning them if one cannot find any substitute; hence the affirmation that they are at the very foundation of society, and an element in its equilibrium, whereas they are a series of mechanisms for unbalancing power relations definitively and everywhere; hence the persistence in regarding them as the humble, but concrete form of every morality, whereas they are a set of physico-political techniques.

MPP5-432 FOUCAULT SEES POWER AS PRODUCING REALITY

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.108-9.

As already indicated, all this problematic presupposed a recasting of the concept of power. Put in a nutshell, it required a theory of productive power. The theory of discursive practices in The Archaeology of Knowledge and L'Ordre du discours remained tied up with too negative a view of power, stressing coercion prohibition and exclusion. Since Discipline and Punish Foucault changed the focus. Now he warned: 'we must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it "excludes", it "represses", it "censors", it "abstracts", it "masks", it "conceals". In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The Individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production.'

MPP5-433 FOUCAULT ADMITS POWER REPRESSES AS WELL AS PRODUCES

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.111.

Ultimately, however, Foucault declares the two non-economic views of power -- the repression theory, or Reich hypothesis, and the war theory, which he ascribes to Nietzsche -- as compatible and even 'linked'. He invites us to regard repression as 'the realization, within the continual warfare of this pseudo-peace (i.e., the normal state of society), of a perpetual relationship of force'. Repression, therefore, is, after all, real -- but just as a subordinate effect of power. Apparently, then, power both 'produces' and 'represses' -- but it 'produces' before repressing, mainly because what it represses individuals -- are already, to a large extent, its 'products'.

MPP5-434 THE INDIVIDUAL IS AN EFFECT OF POWER
 Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.98.

The individual is not to be conceived as a sort of elementary nucleus, a primitive atom, a multiple and inert material on which power comes to fasten or against which it happens to strike, and in so doing subdues or crushes individuals. In fact, it is already one of the prime effects of power that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires, come to be identified and constituted as individuals. The individual, that is, is not the vis-a-vis of power; it is, I believe, one of its prime effects. The individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, it is the element of its articulation. The individual which power has constituted is at the same time its vehicle.

MPP5-435 MICRO-RELATIONS OF POWER ARE KEY
 Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.199.

Generally speaking I think one needs to look rather at how the great strategies of power encrust themselves and depend for their conditions of exercise on the level of the micro-relations of power.

MPP5-436 MODERN SOCIETY IS ESSENTIALLY DISCIPLINARY

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.91-2.

But Foucault doesn't stop here. He sets out to persuade us that Bentham's panopticon, no matter how seldom or how imperfectly realized, is but an epitome of a widespread trend in bourgeois society -- the disciplinary drive. The panopticon, in sum, was just a graphic instance of 'Panopticism' (a label actually used by Foucault as the title of a long, crowning chapter in *Discipline and Punish*). Just as the 'political dream' of traditional society, as expressed in the exile of lepers, was the vision of a pure community, the political dream of modern, bourgeois culture is 'a disciplined society'.

MPP5-437 DISCIPLINARY SOCIETY PRODUCES DOCILE HUMANS

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.94.

The web of discipline aims at generalizing the homo docilis required by 'rational', efficient, 'technical' society: an obedient, hard-working, conscience-ridden, useful creature, pliable to all modern tactics of production and warfare. And ultimately the main way to achieve docility is the moral pressure of continuous comparison between good and bad citizens, young or adult: discipline thrives on 'normalizing judgement'. Bourgeois society bred an obsession with the norm, from the 'ecoles normales' to the keeping up of standards in industrial production and the concern with general norms of health in the modern hospital.

MPP5-438 FOUCAULT SAW MODERNITY AS A CIVILIZATION OF SURVEILLANCE

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.98.

However, bourgeoisie-bashing is not, as we saw, the central message of the book. The worst blows are addressed not as much at the bourgeois as at the Enlightenment, both as an age and as a longrun phenomenon, a cultural evolution still with us: the Enlightenment, alias modernity. Commenting on a contemporary discussing Bentham's panopticon, Foucault embarks on an antithesis between ancient society, 'a civilization of spectacle', and our society, which is 'one not of spectacle, but of surveillance'. In a world without community and public life at its centre, but, on the one hand, private individuals and, on the other, the state, relations are regulated in a form that is the exact reverse of the spectacle. We are much less Greek than we like to believe, says Foucault. Behind our 'great abstraction of exchange' we forcibly train bodies as manipulable useful forces. Our broad circuits of communication serve the centralization (sic) of knowledge; and with us 'the play of signs defines the anchorages of power'.

MPP5-439 FOUCAULT SAW MODERN SOCIETY AS ESSENTIALLY COERCIVE

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.101.

On closer inspection, however, the picture is less simple. Nietzsche and the old Nietzscheans (e.g., Spengler) attacked modern culture as decadent. The new Nietzscheans in France, marked as they are by the impact of Marxism, attack it as repressive. What defined modern culture for Nietzsche was its lack of vitality; what characterizes it for Foucault -- as for Adorno or Marcuse -- is coercion. Foucault, like the Marxists, takes the side of the victims -- a most un-Nietzschean position.

MPP5-440 FOUCAULT SAW MODERN HUMANS AS IMMERSED IN CARCERAL SOCIETY

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.90-1.

From the machine-like empire based on national discipline dreamt of by the tactician Guibert to Napoleon's love for organizational detail, a whole array of disciplinary mirages is considered to have adumbrated bourgeois order in the nineteenth-century Western society. Modern man, writes Foucault, was born in a welter of regulations: meticulous rules and subrules, fussy inspections, 'the supervision of the smallest fragment of life and of the body [...] in the context of the school, the barracks, the hospital or the workshop'. This grey Utopia of the Enlightenment did not of course come wholly true. Yet Foucault thinks that it did manage to pervade large areas of modern culture, and that the prison was the field par excellence of its application. *Discipline and Punish* suggests strong connections between disciplinary ideas from the classical age and the rise of a 'surveillance' model of penal institution -- the birth of the prison in the modern sense -- throughout the early and mid-nineteenth century.

MPP5-441 THE MODERN PERSON IS A SOURCE OF UNINTERRUPTED SURVEILLANCE

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.91.

Prisons became the seat of regimes of total, uninterrupted surveillance. Bentham's 'panopticon' -- an annular architectural contraption with a watchful tower in its middle -- was quickly adopted. With the panopticon or its equivalents, each cell stands within the reach of a central, invisible inspection. Prisoners, not knowing when they are observed, have to behave at all times as though they were being watched. The compact building of old prisons, 'burying' criminals together in depths of stone and darkness (I cannot help thinking of them ascending towards light in the second act of Beethoven's *Fidelio*), was replaced by lighter edifices where inmates were isolated -- and permanently inspected. Exit the hidden dungeon, enter the transparent cell.

MPP5-442 MODERN SOCIAL ORDER IS DESIGNED TO CREATE DOCILE BODIES

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.93.

All in all, the cell and the form, the time-table and the gesture-codes, drill and tactics converged to create 'docile bodies' -- the stuff of disciplinary society. Foucault makes an important historical point: whereas at first disciplines were expected to neutralize dangers, as the Ancien Regime gave way to modern bourgeois society, they came to play a more positive role. At one time military discipline was envisaged just as a means to prevent looting or desertion; then it became a method to increase armed capability. The same goes for schools and workplaces. Watchful organization of work was intended to avoid theft or loss of raw material; in time, it was directed at the enhancement of skills, speeds and productivity. Thus the same disciplines acquired quite new functions.

MPP5-443 FOR FOUCAULT, DISCIPLINARY POWER EXTENDS BEYOND THE PRISON

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.108.

On the very last page of *Discipline and Punish* Foucault stresses that the 'the power of normalization' is not exercised by the prison alone, but also by our social mechanisms to procure health, knowledge and comfort. Consequently, adds he, 'the fabrication of the disciplinary individual' does not rest only on institutions of repression, rejection and marginalization. The carceral transcends the gaol. The study of the prison, therefore, was bound to unfold into an anatomy of social power at large -- as well as, inevitably, a reconsideration of our very concept of power. No wonder so many of Foucault's texts and interviews since the mid-seventies expatiate upon the problem of modern forms of domination.

MPP5-444 FOUCAULT DOESN'T SEE SOCIETY AS PERFECTLY DISCIPLINED

Colin Gordon, afterward to Michel Foucault, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.254-5.

Two supplementary clarifications must be added here. Firstly, the 'macroscopic' focus of the population is not to be equated with Foucault's conception of the held of strategic effects in the real. The logic of the processes he describes is not that of an inexorable globalisation of effects of power towards the ideal horizon of a perfectly subjected totality. Thus Foucault distinguishes his characterisation of our societies as disciplinary from the fantasy of a disciplined society populated by docile, obedient, normalised subjects.

MPP5-445 IT'S POSSIBLE TO COMBAT POWER

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.141-2.

It seems to me that power is 'always already there', that one is never 'outside' it, that there are no 'margins' for those who break with the system to gambol in. But this does not entail the necessity of accepting an inescapable form of domination or an absolute privilege on the side of the law. To say that one can never be 'outside' power does not mean that one is trapped and condemned to defeat no matter what.

MPP5-446 FORCES RESISTING POWER ALSO OCCUR EVERYWHERE

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.142.

There are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised; resistance to power does not have to come from elsewhere to be real, nor is it inexorably frustrated through being the compatriot of power. It exists all the more by being in the same place as power; hence, like power, resistance is multiple and can be integrated in global strategies.

MPP5-447 POINTS OF RESISTANCE EXIST THROUGHOUT THE POWER NETWORK

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY, VOLUME ONE*, 1978, p.95-6.

Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power. Should it be said that one is always "inside" power, there is no "escaping" it, there is no absolute outside where it is concerned, because one is subject to the law in any case? Or that, history being the ruse of reason, power is the ruse of history, always emerging the winner? This would be to misunderstand the strictly relational character of power relationships. Their existence depends on a multiplicity of points of resistance: these play the role of adversary, target, support, or handle in power relations. These points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network. Hence there is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead there is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case: resistances that are possible, necessary, improbable; others that are spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant, or violent; still others that are quick to compromise, interested, or sacrificial; by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations.

MPP5-448 APPARATUSES OF POWER CAN BE REVERSED

Colin Gordon, afterward to Michel Foucault, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.255-6.

The strategically coordinated apparatuses of power which Foucault identifies do not have the status of a transhistorical law. Those which he describes, organised during the nineteenth century around the 'objects' of criminality and sexuality, are implicitly situated as local episodes within a more general history of the political. They constitute an inherently fragile structure and their instruments and techniques are always liable to forms of re-appropriation, reversibility and re-utilisation not only in tactical realignments from 'above' but in counter-offensives from 'below'. This is why no one good or bad ideology of oppression or subversion is possible: thematic implements of power -- individual conscience, norms of sexuality, the security of a population -- have been and are constantly being 'turned round', in both directions.

MPP5-449 THE STATE IS AN EFFECT AND INSTRUMENT OF POWER

Colin Gordon, afterward to Michel Foucault, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.255.

And the State is neither the definitive form assumed by government nor its subject, but rather one of its effects or instruments.

MPP5-450 POWER CAN BE RESISTED

Colin Gordon, afterward to Michel Foucault, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.255.

Foucault's thought on strategy has certain political and ethical applications and corollaries. Perhaps it is now clear that if Foucault's reflection on power is rather more extended than those which historians usually permit themselves, it is not the kind of obsessive serenade which sublimates the desire to personally lay hands on the levers of control. It does not produce a mock-up of a political control room. Nor do its illustrations of the multiplicity, fecundity and productivity of power-relations imply their collective imperviousness to resistance. The study of the history of forms of rationality imposes a certain bias which necessitates greater attention being paid to forms of domination than to forms of insubordination. But the facts of resistance are nevertheless assigned an irreducible role within the analysis. The field of strategies is a field of conflicts: the human material operated on by programmes and technologies is inherently a resistant material. If this were not the case, history itself would become unthinkable.

MPP5-451 THE OMNIPOTENCE OF POWER DOESN'T IMPLY TOTAL DOMINATION

Colin Gordon, afterward to Michel Foucault, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.246-7.

One needs to beware the pitfalls inherent in the word 'power' itself. Foucault's thesis of the omnipresence of relations of power or power/ knowledge is all too easily run together with the idea that all power, in so far as it is held, is a kind of sovereignty amounting to untrammelled mastery, absolute rule or command. Hence Foucault is taken to attribute an absolute omnipotence to 'apparatuses' of power. It hardly needs to be pointed out that, if this were the case, history would assume the form of a homogeneous narrative of perpetual despotism, and the subtleties of genealogical analysis would be entirely superfluous. In fact the concepts of strategies, programmes and technologies of power serve to analyse not the perfect correspondence between the orders of discourse, practice and effects, but the manner in which they fail to correspond and the positive significance that can attach to such discrepancies.

MPP5-452 FOUCAULT DOESN'T SEE POWER PRODUCING TOTAL SOCIAL SUBJECTION

Colin Gordon, afterward to Michel Foucault, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.246.

Readers of Foucault sometimes emerge with the dismaying impression of a paranoid hyper-rationalist system in which the strategies-technologies-programmes of power merge into a monolithic regime of social subjection. The misunderstanding here consists in a conflation of historical levels which reads into the text two massive illusions or paralogsms: an illusion of 'realisation' whereby it is supposed that programmes elaborated in certain discourses are integrally transposed to the domain of actual practices and techniques, and an illusion of 'effectivity' whereby certain technical methods of social domination are taken as being actually implemented and enforced upon the social body as a whole.

MPP5-453 A NEW OPPOSITIONAL POLITICS MUST BE INVENTED

Michel Foucault, philosopher, College de France, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.190.

Political analysis and criticism have in a large measure still to be invented -- so too have the strategies which will make it possible to modify the relations of force, to co-ordinate them in such a way that such a modification is possible and can be inscribed in reality. That is to say, the problem is not so much that of defining a political 'position' (which is to choose from a pre-existing set of possibilities) but to imagine and to bring into being new schemas of politicisation. If 'politicisation' means falling back on ready-made choices and institutions, then the effort of analysis involved in uncovering the relations of force and mechanisms of power is not worthwhile. To the vast new techniques of power correlated with multinational economies and bureaucratic States, one must oppose a politicisation which will take new forms.

MPP5-454 MISUNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF POWER LEADS TO PSEUDO-SOLUTIONS

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.99.

For Foucault, the rise of current power relationships is traceable to specific local practices and must be understood on the basis of them. Failure to do so would lead -- and has led -- to the assumption that by destroying oppressive macropolitical entities and practices, the power arrangements reflected in those entities and practices will themselves disappear.

MPP5-455 A THEORY OF POWER IS CRITICAL TO UNDERSTANDING WORLD POLITICS

Kenneth Thompson, Professor of Political Science, University of Virginia, *MORALISM AND MORALITY IN POLITICS AND DIPLOMACY*, 1985, p.121.

The brilliant diplomatic historian, Louis J. Halle, for more than twenty years a professor at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, declares that the obstacle most crippling to understanding contemporary world politics is the absence of a theory of power and diplomacy.

MPP5-456 PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF POWER ENHANCES POLITICAL RESISTANCE

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.75.

Rather, it should be taken to mean that had power been thought to operate in the ways in which it does indeed operate (at least in the modern epoch), more fruitful political resistance would have been more likely. The point, if in some sense teleological, is Darwinian rather than Aristotelian. We can explain the success of so many operations of power by the fact that they were not discovered, owing to a misapprehension about power; this does not imply, however, that power "wanted" us to have this misapprehension.

MPP5-457 LIBERATION REQUIRES A PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF POWER

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.73.

Inseparable from this analytics of power is the idea, insisted on by both Foucault and Deleuze, that power does not merely suppress its objects; it creates them as well. We will see in Chapter 5, below, Foucault's tracing of the creation of the psychological subject, and the political significance of this creation. But, in more general terms, if power is conceived as operating not upon its objects but within them, not "from above" but "from below," not outside other relationships but across them, this entails that power is not a suppressive force but a creative one, giving rise not only to that which must be resisted but also, and more insidiously, to the forms resistance itself often takes. That is what makes specific political analysis necessary: if power creates its own resistance, then the liberation from specific forms of power must take account of the kind of resistance that is being engaged in, on pain of repeating that which one is trying to escape.

MPP5-458 FOUCAULT DOESN'T REJECT THE IDEA OF TRUTH

Heikki Patomaki, Finnish Institute of International Affairs, *JOURNAL OF PEACE RESEARCH*, August 1997, p.327.

Similarly, one should take seriously this quote of Foucault (1996), p. 450: What I try to achieve is the history of relations, which thought maintains with truth; the history of thought insofar as it is the thought of truth. All those who say truth does not exist are for me simple minded. Although the truths Foucault is talking about here are always in relation to certain historical ways of being and 'arts of living', and thereby to certain past or present discursive and non-discursive practices, they are truths about something.

MPP5-459 FOUCAULT SEEKS BOTH TRUTH AND POLITICAL EFFECTIVENESS

Michel Foucault, philosopher, *College de France, POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.64.

But if one is interested in doing historical work that has political meaning, utility and effectiveness, then this is possible only if one has some kind of involvement with the struggles taking place in the area in question. I tried first to do a genealogy of psychiatry because I had had a certain amount of practical experience in psychiatric hospitals and was aware of the combats, the lines of force, tensions and points of collision which existed there. My historical work was undertaken only as a function of those conflicts. The problem and the stake there was the possibility of a discourse which would be both true and strategically effective, the possibility of a historical truth which could have a political effect.

MPP5-460 FOUCAULT OFFERS POLITICAL TOOLS FOR RESISTANCE

Colin Gordon, afterward to Michel Foucault, *POWER/KNOWLEDGE*, 1980, p.258.

Here, as Foucault says in Chapter 5, the object is neither a denunciation of the effects of knowledge in general, nor the fabrication of a knowledge for the instruction, correction and guidance of every possible resistance. At this point the contribution of the intellectual as historical analyst ends and gives way to the reflection and decisions, not of the managers and theoreticians of resistance but of those who themselves choose to resist. For the recent eruptions of 'popular knowledge' and 'insurrections of subjugated knowledges' which he celebrates (p. 81f), what Foucault may have to offer is a set of possible tools, tools for the identification of the conditions of possibility which operate through the obviousnesses and enigmas of our present, tools perhaps also for the eventual modification of those conditions.

MPP5-461 FOUCAULT'S PHILOSOPHY HAS BEEN A USEFUL TOOL

Bernard-Henri Levy, French philosopher, *ADVENTURES ON THE FREEDOM ROAD*, 1995, p.345-6.

It isn't a question of determining whether Foucault's system stands up or whether his objection to Marxist politics was the "right" one. As you will recall, Foucault urged those who read his books to use them as if they were boxes of tools. That's what we did, and our reason for doing so was that they were the appropriate tools for dismantling a system we no longer needed. If you compare Aron's methodology with that of Foucault, you realise how old and worn out it is, having conveyed an overwhelming sense of rightness for several decades. You'll become aware that it doesn't work and never did. *Surveiller et punir* offered an alternative philosophy with which to demolish other systems. You didn't find this in *Dix-huit leçons* and *L'Opium des intellectuels*.

MPP5-462 FOUCAULT'S THEORY OF POWER WAS A USEFUL CORRECTIVE TO MARXISM

Bernard-Henri Levy, French philosopher, *ADVENTURES ON THE FREEDOM ROAD*, 1995, p.345.

I won't discuss here what Foucault really meant when he claimed that "man" was not "the oldest problem" or even "the most persistent" in the history of mankind. But I do remember his critique of the concept of "power", his notion of "knowledge-as-power", and the fresh attention he paid to what he called "the infinitely small elements of political power". I also remember the way he elaborated the concept of the "physical nature of power" from book to book. I remember the picture he drew of the social body as a scattered constellation of forces which confronted each other and of monads which balanced each other. Today, I am aware there was no better or newer method of confounding and then eliminating the old Marxist notion of power viewed as a gigantic macro-structure with its intricacies and procedures.

MPP5-463 FOUCAULT'S THEORY IS THE MOST USEFUL FOR OPPOSITIONAL POLITICS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.6-7.

Foucault is explicitly poststructuralist, though he is not, at least explicitly, postmodernist. He does not think we can operate without grand narratives or legitimating discourses. This is our fate as linguistic and hence cultural subjects. What he teaches us is that even if we refuse to be postmodernists, we can nevertheless remain skeptical about our use of legitimating discourse. Subjects are always caught within the matrices of power regimes. Such power regimes are always open to being deconstructed. This means that while we must operate with legitimizing discourses, we can also acknowledge that such discourses are always subject to delegitimation. It is this flexibility which makes Foucault's theory more useful for the purposes of oppositional politics than either Lyotard's or Rorty's.

MPP5-464 FOUCAULT'S EFFECTS ARE POLITICALLY PROGRESSIVE

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.137.

From my point of view, any leftist political movement -- any movement which tries to call our attention to what the strong are currently doing to the weak -- is a lot better than no left. Dialectical materialism was a pretty incoherent and silly philosophical system, and it eventually fell into the hands of mad tyrants. But it got quite a bit of good done while it lasted. Now that Marxism no longer looks plausible even in Paris, leftists who feel the need for a powerful philosophical backup are resorting to de Man and Foucault. But they are still doing a lot more good than most of their critics are doing.

MPP5-465 FOUCAULT'S POSITION LEADS TO ACTIVISM, NOT APATHY

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.97-8.

Further, those suggestions must be tentative in that all politics is a matter of practices and power, both of which are contingent and may turn out to create a situation worse than the one from which escape is sought. "My point," Foucault once said, "is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to a hyper- and pessimistic activism."

MPP5-466 POSTSTRUCTURALISM OFFERS A NEW, MORE EFFECTIVE POLITICS

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.12.

Poststructuralism, particularly as it is embodied in the works of Foucault, Deleuze, and Lyotard, has defined a tradition of the type of political philosophy we have here called "tactical." The political commitments of these thinkers run directly counter to the dominant traditions of political philosophy, be they formal or strategic, and define a possibility for political philosophizing that offers a new, and perhaps better, perspective for political intervention.

MPP5-467 FOUCAULT'S VIEW OF TRUTH IS PARADOXICAL

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.147.

So at bottom Foucault's enterprise seems stuck on the horns of a huge epistemological dilemma: if it tells the truth, then all knowledge is suspect in its pretence of objectivity; but in that case, how can the theory itself vouch for its truth? It's like the famous paradox of the Cretan liar -- and Foucault seemed quite unable to get out of it (which explains why he didn't even try to face it).

MPP5-468 FOUCAULT HAD A CONTRADICTIONARY VIEW OF TRUTH

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.147.

Ultimately, then, Foucault dared not to include his own theory into what he says of the intellectuals' thought: that all is fight, nothing light, in their endeavours. The Archaeology confessed its theory to be 'groundless' -- yet it did not say that its success was a matter of coming to blows. Now if the demonstration of the truth of his analytics of power does not depend on the blunt pragmatism of the struggle, then at least one 'pure' truth-claim subsists. But in this case, as Cotesta was quick to notice, there arises a contradiction between the truth criteria stated by the theory (truth is might, not light) and the apparent claim of the theory to be itself accepted as true, regardless of such criteria.

MPP5-469 FOUCAULT ULTIMATELY APPEALED TO OBJECTIVE TRUTH

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.144.

To be sure, over and again Foucault kept denying that he was writing normal history. The last time (I think) was in the introduction to *L'Usage des plaisirs*, where he once more warned that his studies were 'of history', not of 'a historian'. However, no amount of equivocation can get him off the hook on this point. Historian or not, he constantly worked on the assumption that he was being faithful to each age's outlook on each relevant subject (insanity, knowledge, punishment, sex) and that his documents (e.g., medical and administrative records, old treatises of many a discipline, prison files, the literature of sexual ethics, etc.) could prove him right. The very fact that he used words like 'documents' (as he last did at the outset of *L'Usage des plaisirs*) shows that for all his 'Nietzschean' affectation of contempt for objective truth, he liked to have it speak for him as much as any conventional historian. In other words, whatever kind of historiography he was up to -- the historians' one, or any other -- Foucault was the first to claim that the evidence was on his side. Therefore, we can hardly exempt his historical analyses from the standard assessment of such studies. Hence our right to ask: are his interpretations borne out by the record, or are they too strained or too fanciful? Now while some of them are truly suggestive and even cast a genuinely new light on the historical evidence, many others are, as we saw, just tall orders largely unsupported by the facts. No more, no less.

MPP5-470 REJECTING TRUTH UNDERMINES CRITIQUE

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.148.

To Habermas, the need for keeping such a standard should prevent us from dropping the Enlightenment's ideal of a 'rational critique of existing institutions'. By denying themselves a rational theory in this sense, philosophers of the first generation of the Frankfurt school, like Max Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno, ended up by relinquishing a proper theoretical approach and collapsed critique into an ad hoc negation of contemporary society. Now the point is, this abandonment of the principle of a universal reason spells 'the end of philosophy'; and Habermas discerns three main culprits of such an inglorious outcome: old Frankfurian critique, Heidegger's irrationalist ontology, and Foucauldian genealogy.

MPP5-471 DEMYSTIFICATION REQUIRES A STANDARD OF TRUTH

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.148.

In March 1983, Jurgen Habermas delivered a couple of lectures at the College de France. Published under the title *Lectures on the Discourse of Modernity*, they discuss some post-structuralist streams of thought, including the later work of Foucault. To Habermas, Foucault replaced the repression/emancipation model founded by Marx and Freud (and enshrined by the 'critical theory' of his own Frankfurt school) by the analysis of a plurality of discursive and power formations which dovetail and follow each other but which, unlike the meaning structures dealt with by critical theory, cannot be differentiated according to their validity. Moreover, Habermas points out, demystifying culture only makes sense if we preserve a standard of truth capable of telling theory from ideology, knowledge from mystification.

MPP5-472 FOUCAULT ATTACKS AN OVERLY NARROW CONCEPT OF REASON

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.33-4.

On the one hand - doubtless for strategic purposes - Foucault narrows his genealogical sights to equate 'reason' with just that singular episode (the Cartesian cogito) and just that arguably consequent history (the 'great confinement') which together allow him to press the case for condemning rationality and all its works. Thus '(t)o all appearances it is reason that he [Foucault] interns, but, like Descartes, he chooses the reason of yesterday as his target and not the possibility of meaning in general'. For on the other hand - by the strictest order of discursive necessity - Foucault is constrained to abide by the ground-rules of reasoned critical argument even in the act of denouncing them with all the rhetorical means at his disposal.

MPP5-473 FOUCAULT'S CRITIQUE OF REASON IS SELF-UNDERMINING

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM*, 1994, p.34-5.

This is precisely his point about Foucault: that the latter falls into manifest absurdity when he claims that *Madness and Civilization* is not only a book about the history of 'madness' but one that is written in the very language and from the deepest interior of the discourse of insanity itself. Foucault could not have advanced a single proposition on the subject - let alone an entire work of sophisticated argument and erudite scholarship - without undermining his own professed objective at every turn. Quite simply, reason is not an option in the sense that one could leave it behind (or opt out of it) for the sake of promoting some radically 'other' kind of discourse, some language on the far side of truth, normativity, 'logocentric' thinking, or whatever.

MPP5-474 CONFLATING KNOWLEDGE AND POWER UNDERMINES ETHICAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM*, 1994, p.118.

At any rate it offers a more promising option than those other (post-structuralist or textualist) theories which count 'reality' a world well lost and 'truth' just a cover-term to mask the operations of an all-pervasive epistemic will-to-power. For the result of such thinking, if consistently pursued, is to undermine every last standard of scholarly, critical, and ethical accountability.

MPP5-475 FOUCAULT'S THEORIES UNDERMINE THE POSSIBILITY OF TRUTH

Alan Megill, University of Iowa, *PROPHETS OF EXTREMITY*, 1985, p.245.

But this is not to exempt Foucault from criticism, for his claims are infinitely more radical than those of Weaver's "true rhetorician." The "true rhetorician" in Weaver's reading, admits the legitimacy of a counterpart to rhetoric--namely, dialectic. Dialectic is here defined in the Aristotelian rather than in the Hegelian sense as (in Weaver's words) "a method of investigation whose object is the establishment of truth about doubtful propositions." In contrast, by his exclusion of representation, Foucault excludes the establishment of truth in this sense. Foucault speaks not of truth but of "truth" understanding this term in the same way that Nietzsche understands it in "On Truth and Lie." Thus, we can call into question, as having a rhetorical significance and no other kind, Foucault's claim that he is engaged in "fictioning" a history "on the basis of a political reality that makes it true."

MPP5-476 FOUCAULT'S CRITIQUE OF TRUTH MEANS THERE'S NO REASON WE SHOULD BELIEVE HIM

Alan Megill, University of Iowa, *PROPHETS OF EXTREMITY*, 1985, p.251-2.

But we have not yet fathomed the full extent of the difficulty that Nietzsche and Foucault raise for us. As Kaufmann points out, Nietzsche considers the will to power an absolutely universal principle, to which even the search for truth is subject. But what is Nietzsche's project if not the articulation of a truth--namely, the truth that all truth is subject to the will to power? Kaufmann observes that "by including truth within the confines of this theory of the will to power, [Nietzsche] has perhaps called in a Trojan Horse that threatens his entire philosophy with ruin." The same objection--if objection it is--applies to Foucault. Foucault tells us that there is no such thing as a "genuine" rhetoric, that all rhetorics are subject to the play of power, that all rhetorics are coercive. But he does so in a rhetoric that by this very argument cannot be genuine. Why, then, should we believe Foucault? All Cretans are liars. Or are they? We can hardly be sure. The move that seemed to get us outside discourse finishes by enclosing us even more deeply within it.

MPP5-477 IF KNOWLEDGE IS SIMPLY POWER, THOUGHT IS WORTHLESS

Amy Gutmann, Professor of Politics, Princeton, *MULTICULTURALISM*, 1994, p.18-9.

The argument is self-undermining, both logically and practically. By its internal logic, deconstructionism has nothing more to say for the view that intellectual standards are masks for the will to political power than that it too reflects the will to power of deconstructionists. But why then bother with intellectual life at all, which is not the fastest, surest, or even most satisfying path to political power, if it is political power that one is really after.

MPP5-478 IF KNOWLEDGE IS POWER, THE LESS POWERFUL COULD NEVER WIN.

Amy Gutmann, Professor of Politics, Princeton, *MULTICULTURALISM*, 1994, p.19.

Deconstructionism is also impractical. If intellectual standards are political in the sense of reflecting the antagonistic interests and will to power of particular groups, then disadvantaged groups have no choice but to accept the hegemonic standards that society imposes on the academy and the academy in turn imposes on them. The less powerful cannot possibly hope to have their standards win out, especially if their academic spokespersons publicize the view that intellectual standards are nothing more than assertions or reflections of the will to power.

MPP5-479 GOOD ARGUMENTS DON'T SIMPLY REFLECT THE WILL TO POWER

Amy Gutmann, Professor of Politics, Princeton, *MULTICULTURALISM*, 1994, p.19.

The deconstructionist outlook on the academy not only deconstructs itself, it does so in a dangerous way. Deconstructionists do not act as if they believed that common standards are impossible. They act, and often speak, as if they believed that the university curriculum should include works by and about disadvantaged groups. And some version of this position, as we have seen, is defensible on universalistic grounds. But the reduction of all intellectual disagreements to conflicts of group interests is not. It does not stand up to evidence or reasoned argument. Anyone who doubts this conclusion might try to demonstrate in a nontautological way that the strongest arguments for and against legalizing abortion, not the arguments offered by politicians but the most careful and compelling philosophical arguments, simply reflect the will to power, class and gender interests of their proponents.

MPP5-480 EQUALING KNOWLEDGE WITH POWER DESTROYS REASONED ARGUMENT

Amy Gutmann, Professor of Politics, Princeton, *MULTICULTURALISM*, 1994, p.19-20.

Reductionism of intellect and argument to political interest threatens to politicize the university more profoundly and destructively than ever before. I say "threatens" because deconstructionism has not actually "taken over" the academy, as some critics claim. But the anti-intellectual, politicizing threat it poses is nonetheless real. A great deal of intellectual life, especially in the humanities and the "soft" social sciences, depends upon dialogue among reasonable people who disagree on the answers to some fundamental questions about the value of various literary, political, economic, religious, educational, scientific, and aesthetic understandings and achievements. Colleges and universities are the only major social institutions dedicated to fostering knowledge, understanding, intellectual dialogue, and the pursuit of reasoned argument in the many directions that it may lead. The threat of deconstructionism to intellectual life in the academy is twofold: (1) it denies a priori that there are any reasonable answers to fundamental questions, and (2) it reduces every answer to an exercise of political power.

MPP5-481 BELIEVING POWER SATURATES ALL RELATIONS UNDERMINES SCIENCE

Paul Gross and Norman Levitt, University of Virginia Professor of Life Sciences and Rutgers University Professor of Mathematics, *HIGHER SUPERSTITION*, 1994, p.236

We worry for the reason articulated by Arthur Potynen, for example, among many others who have begun to ask this question: Those attempting to ignore Post-modernism are many: for example, the natural sciences and business departments often hope that the affected, yet essentially harmless, humanities will remain isolated and irrelevant. But if power is the essence of all human endeavors, then can science escape being labeled willful and coercive? Can business be anything other than rapacious? Can either science or business continue to function in a political culture that assumes them to be oppressive.

MPP5-482 IGNORING SCIENCE CRIPPLES FOUCAULT'S THOUGHT

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.150-1.

Consequently, no history of the present can ever be truly cogent that makes little or no room for an account of science, its nature and its impact. Nothing being more intrinsically modern than sustained cognitive growth, no critical theory of the present can succeed without a serious discussion -- epistemological as well as sociological -- of science. By the same token, Foucault's decision to scrutinize 'informal knowledge' instead of looking into hard science was bound to cripple his programme. No exorcism of the transcendental subject, no detection of power mechanisms could possibly offset the loss of historical vision caused by the lack of a proper attention to world-shaping knowledge.

MPP5-483 FOUCAULT OFFERS A HISTORICAL CARICATURE OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.98-9.

Ultimately, Foucault sees the punitive and the carceral as inbuilt in something which partakes of their nature without being necessarily associated with prisons: 'the disciplinary' as the gist of modern civilization. That is why, in the end, his book speaks far more of discipline than of punishment. As a whole, therefore, *The Birth of the Prison* stands or falls with his unabashed *Kulturkritik* -- the least convincing of its elements. For what Foucault offers can be considered a Marcusean account of the eighteenth century: a brazen historical caricature, where the Enlightenment features as an age of internalization of inhumanity, largely akin to that described by Marcuse as the essence of our own 'unidimensional' culture.

MPP5-484 HISTORIANS REJECT FOUCAULT'S VIEW OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.104.

A second major flaw in *Discipline and Punish* refers less to getting facts wrong than to lop-sided evaluations of historical data. Here the main casualty is the view of Enlightenment reformism. We saw how Foucault interprets it: as a totalitarian enterprise in all but name. However, this does not chime with the historians' appraisal -- and I don't mean by it anything like naive progressivist accounts.

MPP5-485 THE ENLIGHTENMENT THEORY OF EDUCATION WAS LIBERTARIAN NOT DISCIPLINARY
J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.103-4.

At this stage I feel tempted to add another possible bone of contention: the history of pedagogical thought. I could find no quotes from the *Emile* or from Pestalozzi in *Discipline and Punish*. Yet, as everyone knows, the late eighteenth century was an age of pedagogical effervescence, predominantly in an emancipatory and humanitarian direction. One of Foucault's footnotes refers to the scholarly work of G. Snyders, *La Pédagogie en France aux XVII^e. et XVIII^e. siècles* (1965). But he makes no use whatsoever of Snyders's well documented contrast between a 'pedagogy of surveillance' prevalent during the seventeenth century and the new, 'natural' teaching and learning methods gradually risen throughout the age of Enlightenment. If -- just for the sake of argument -- we accept the description of the bourgeois school as a mirror of the prison, then at the very least it should be mentioned that this 'carceral' education belied, instead of fulfilling, a good deal of the thought of the Enlightenment in matters educational.

MPP5-486 THE ENLIGHTENMENT HAD LIBERTARIAN AND EGALITARIAN AS WELL AS DISCIPLINARY ELEMENTS

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.105.

The point, however, is that the chief penal reformer was an egalitarian libertarian; therefore, one can hardly take the Enlightenment's view of penalty as a gruesome disciplinary persuasion. Diderot thought Beccaria's plans were just an ineffectual Utopia (in fact, many of them were readily implemented, especially in the Austrian Empire's lands, though not in France). D'Alembert praised the profound humanity of Beccarian penology. Paradoxically, by restricting his handful of quotations to the utilitarian side of *Dei delitti e delle pene*, Foucault sides with those who, like Voltaire, strove to give a strictly 'technical', nonsociological (let alone 'socialist') interpretation of such a seminal and influential book. Yet Beccaria's utilitarianism, strong enough to place him among the main acknowledged forerunners of Bentham, was not at all incompatible (nor was Bentham's, for that matter) with powerful libertarian and philanthropic lines of thought. As Venturi recognizes, in practice, most plans for penal reform at the close of the eighteenth century exhibited a mixture of humanitarianism, economic calculation and remnants of ancient cruelty transmitted into new, more rational forms. But not for a moment does he, or any other renowned historian of that age, suggest that the Enlightenment is best equated with a crippling overall disciplinary drive.

MPP5-487 FOUCAULT'S CRITIQUE OF MODERNITY FAILS

David Couzens Hoy, Professor of Philosophy, University of California-Santa Cruz, FOUCAULT: A CRITICAL READER, 1986, p.9

From Habermas's perspective Foucault's belittling of the progressive character of modern enlightenment and rationality is mistaken. He thinks Foucault's generalization of panoptical or conformist forces to the entire process of the modernization of society is false. Also, by ignoring the progress achieved through the modern guarantees of liberty and legality, Habermas thinks that Foucault fails to see clearly that the real problem is that the legal means for securing freedom also endanger it. Finally, Foucault's attacks on the human sciences for being unconsciously manipulative and thus uncritically co-opted are out-of-date since for Habermas these fields are genuinely hermeneutical and critical by the 1970s.

MPP5-488 BOURGEOIS FREEDOMS ARE REAL AND MEANINGFUL

Anthony Giddens, Professor of Sociology, Cambridge, PROFILES AND CRITIQUES IN SOCIAL THEORY, 1982, p.222

But the 'mere' bourgeois freedoms of freedom of movement, formal equality before the law, and the right to organise politically, have turned out to be very real freedoms in the light of the twentieth-century experience of totalitarian societies in which they are absent or radically curtailed.

MPP5-489 FOUCAULT'S ANARCHISM IS TOTALLY NEGATIVE

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.155.

But Foucault did not just follow anarchism. Actually, what made him a neo-anarchist was the addition of two new aspects to the classical theory of anarchy. First, his strict anti-Utopianism. The main anarchist thinkers of the nineteenth century were also great Utopians. Though deeply suspicious of impersonal institutions, they made a point of proposing new forms of economic and social life, such as Proudhon's mutualism or Kropotkin's cooperatives. Today's neo-anarchism, by contrast, sounds thoroughly negative. It seems to possess no *pars construens*; its beliefs consist entirely in what it refuses, not in any positive ideals as well.

MPP5-490 FOUCAULT ANTI-DEMOCRATIC

Christina Sommers, Clark U. Philosopher, WHO STOLE FEMINISM?, 1994, p.229.

Michel Foucault, a professor of philosophy at the distinguished College de France and an irreverent social thinker who felt deeply alienated from the society in which he lived, introduced his theory of interior disciplines in 1975. His book *Discipline and Punish*, with its novel explanation of how large groups of people could be controlled without the need of exterior controllers, took intellectual Paris by storm. Foucault had little love for the modern democratic state. Like Marx, he was interested in the forces that keep citizens of democracies law-abiding and obedient.

MPP5-491 FOUCAULT'S THEORY IS BANKRUPT—IT CAN'T DISTINGUISH BETWEEN STALINISM AND DEMOCRACY

Christina Sommers, Clark University philosopher, *WHO STOLE FEMINISM?*, 1994, p.230.

How seriously can one take Foucault's theory? Not very, says Princeton political philosopher Michael Walzer, who characterizes Foucault's politics as infantile leftism. Foucault was aware that he was equating modern democracies with repressively brutal systems like the Soviet prison camps in the Gulag. In a 1977 interview, he showed some concern about how his ideas might be interpreted: "I am indeed worried by a certain use . . . which consists in saying, 'Everyone has their own Gulag, the Gulag is here at our door, in our cities, our hospitals, our prisons, it's here in our heads.'" But, as Walzer points out, so long as Foucault rejected the possibility of individual freedom, which is the moral basis for liberal democracy, it was unclear how he could sustain the distinction between the real Gulag and the one inside the heads of bourgeois citizens.

MPP5-492 FOUCAULT COLLAPSED THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND TOTALITARIANISM

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.117.

Now while Foucault's scorn of interests, in his analysis of power, left him without much use for the concept of freedom as personal independence, his conflation of subjectivity and subjection, besides undermining the notion of reflection as self-development, made a mockery of the idea of freedom as individual autonomy. As a consequence, Foucault had no room for the traditional recognition of basic differences between liberal regimes and despotic polities -- a recognition shared with liberalism by mainstream radical thought, beginning with classical Marxism. Actually, Foucault set so little store by the gap between free and unfree civil societies that in 1976 he had the cheek to tell K.S. Karol in an interview on the Soviet penal system that the surveillance methods used in the USSR were just an enlarged version of disciplinary techniques first established by the Western bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century.

MPP5-493 IGNORING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND TOTALITARIANISM IS POLITICALLY DANGEROUS

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.117.

There is something definitely perverse in so equating the Gulag with Taylorism as 'techniques easily transplanted' and as such bequeathed by capitalism to Communist ideocracy. What the equation left out, in terms of historical analysis, was simply everything that counts -- the whole ideological and institutional environment which, in the liberal West, never permitted the setting up and maintenance of Gulags, no matter how Western may have been (in fact, English), in its origins, the idea of small-scale concentration camps. Furthermore, this kind of historical howler is politically as dangerous as it is foolish. And let it not be said that Foucault was anyway plainly rejecting the Soviet system together with its allegedly borrowed disciplinary techniques. Condemning the Gulag is far from enough: one should do it without misconstruing its nature and ancestry. And the genealogist of modern power, of all people, should be the last to err in this respect.

MPP5-494 FOUCAULT'S IDEA THAT PRISONS INTEND TO PRODUCE DELINQUENCY IS CIRCULAR

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.107.

Now Foucault, as indicated, says that we should stop wondering at the failure of prison to deter crime and correct criminals and realize that the actual purpose of prisons is precisely to maintain and produce delinquency, by implicitly encouraging recidivism and converting the occasional offender into a habitual criminal. Although Foucault's rhetorical style leaves the consequence-explanation suggested rather than asserted, his reasoning entails the presumption that a *cui bono* question -- what are prisons useful for? -- is not just a heuristic guide among others, but a privileged path for reaching the true *raison d'être* of prisons. The point is, teleological explanations of this kind do not, of course, qualify as genuine causal analysis; they just assume causes without demonstrating any causal mechanism; hence the circularity and the question-begging.

MPP5-495 FOUCAULT DOESN'T OFFER A VALID HISTORY OF THE PRISON

Alan Megill, University of Iowa, *PROPHETS OF EXTREMITY*, 1985, p.246.

I am arguing, however, against naive readings of Foucault. For example, there is a temptation to derive from Foucault's history of the prison true propositions regarding the actual institution within society that we know as the prison. But it is an error to try to derive from Foucault such propositions as, for example, "the prison exists in order to foster delinquency and thus to provide a rationale for strengthening the instruments of repression." Rather, what one can usefully find in Foucault's writings on the prison are suggestions, pregnant hints for further work and investigation, perspectives that, pursued and tested, may allow us to see more clearly the world in which we live--and may perhaps help us in any attempts to alter that world. Foucault is best treated as an animator--not as an authority.

MPP5-496 THE PRISON DEVELOPED AS A CONSCIOUS SOCIAL CHOICE, NOT JUST AN EFFECT OF POWER

Anthony Giddens, Professor of Sociology, Cambridge, *PROFILES AND CRITIQUES IN SOCIAL THEORY*, 1982, p.222

This first objection has concrete implications for the analysis that Foucault has produced of the prison and the clinic. 'Punishment', 'discipline', and especially 'power' itself, are characteristically spoken of by him as though they were agents—indeed the real agents of history. But the development of prisons, clinics and hospitals was not a phenomenon that merely appeared 'behind the backs' of those who designed them, helped to build them, or were their inmates. Ignatieff's work on the origins of prisons is in this respect a useful counterbalance to Foucault. The reorganisation and expansion of the prison system in the nineteenth century was closely bound up with the perceived needs of state authorities to construct new modes of controlling miscreants in large urban spaces, where the sanctioning procedures of the local community could no longer apply.

MPP5-497 FOUCAULT'S UNDERSTANDING OF POWER VASTLY OVERSIMPLIFIED—MAKES COMPREHENSION IMPOSSIBLE

Charles Taylor, McGill philosopher, *FOUCAULT: A CRITICAL READER*, 1986, p.82-3.

Foucault's attraction is partly that of a terrible simplificateur. His espousal of the reversal of Clausewitz's aphorism, which makes us see politics as war carried on by other means, can open insights in certain situations. But to make this one's basic axiom for the examination of modern power as such leaves out too much. Foucault's opposition between the old model of power, based on sovereignty/obedience, and the new one based on domination/subjugation leaves out everything in Western history which has been animated by civic humanism or analogous movements. And that means a massive amount of what is specific to our civilization. Without this in one's conceptual armoury Western history and societies become incomprehensible, as they are for that reason to so many Russians (like Solzhenitsyn).

MPP5-498 FOUCAULT FAILS TO GRASP THE STRUCTURES OF POWER

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.183.

Foucault's anecdotal and almost microscopic treatment of power notwithstanding, his very endeavor to show its ubiquity in fact makes power too cosmic and elusive to grasp. We know the details of power -- often quite marginal details -- but we do not know the premises and the structure of power, notably, the crucial social relations that underpin it. Seen only as the exercise of coercion (which the crowds of September 1792 certainly exercised!), power becomes too ubiquitous to cope with. It is everywhere -- and, functionally, beyond comprehension -- however much it may vary in degrees or be concentrated by institutions.

MPP5-499 THE EXAGGERATION OF POWER DEPRIVES IT OF ANALYTICAL USEFULNESS

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.116.

As Ruiz-Miguel wisely concludes, the result of thus reducing every social relation to power is descriptively very poor, since the overbroadening of the concept of power corresponds to an equal loss in depth and specificity. Exactly the same drawback appears to afflict Foucault's description of social power. Jean Baudrillard said in *Oublier Foucault* (1977): 'Quand on parle tant du pouvoir, c'est qu'il n'est plus nulle part.' One might as well have it the other way round: the more you see power everywhere, the less you are able to speak thereof.

MPP5-500 FOUCAULT EXAGGERATES THE EFFECTS OF POWER

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.115.

We can therefore say that one of the peculiarities of Foucault's anatomy of power is its pancratism: its tendency to sound as a systematic reduction of all social processes to largely unspecified patterns of domination. Now pancratism is a considerable liability from an analytical point of view. Indeed, to say that power is suffused all over society, or even that some form of power permeates all major social relations (two rather plausible propositions) does not mean that everything in society, or even everything significant therein, bears the imprint of power as a defining feature.

MPP5-501 FOUCAULT'S THEORY OF POWER DOESN'T JUSTIFY IGNORING SUBJECTIVE INTERESTS

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.111.

Here we seem to have two problems conflated. On the one hand (a), by proclaiming the ubiquity of power, he appears to be asserting no more than the plausible idea that power is spread out across most areas of society, power relations obtaining, of course, in practically all spheres of life. On the other hand (b), Foucault exempts power from action analysis (no will, no intention, no interest will ever help us to understand power). However, (b) by no means follows from (a). The recognition that power may indeed be everywhere does not at all enjoin us to get rid of intentions and interests while studying it. A bad piece of structuralist subject-phobia has been yoked together with a sound promise of social power analysis.

MPP5-502 FOUCAULT'S IDEA OF POWER EXPLAINS NOTHING

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.118.

Given Foucault's brilliant contribution to Pyrotechnical philosophy, this sounds like a fine piece of stylistic self-knowledge. But the trouble is, printed Molotov cocktails can damage the ways we think about power and politics, not least by substituting fiery moods for cool rational analysis. For I can't help agreeing with Peter Dews: Foucauldian power, having nothing determinate to which it could be opposed, loses all explanatory content. The dogmatic elision of the subject robs coercion of its object, leaving domination dematerialized. As even an admirer, Edward Said, has rightly deplored, there was not a word about how and why power 'is conquered, employed or held on to. Foucault's 'cratology' remains as unsatisfactory as his history of punishment and discipline.

MPP5-503 FOUCAULT'S IDEA OF POWER LACKS EXPLANATORY FORCE

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.156.

Now the conceptual mannerisms of Foucauldian 'cratology' do not seem to have built on the realism of such insights. On the contrary: by seeing power everywhere, and by equating (in most of his work) culture with domination, Foucault, as we noticed, actually greatly reduced the explanatory force of his power concepts. Leftist radicals often praise Foucauldian analysis for its ability to spot forms and levels of power overlooked by Marxism; but the truth is, in overall terms, Foucault's obsession with power did little to enhance our objective grasp of power mechanisms, past or present. Much was claimed, too little demonstrated. By turning 'countercultural', anarchism surely became more glamorous -- but its cognitive bite did not become sharper for that. And Foucault -- after Marcuse -- was the high priest who presided over the wedding of anarchism and the counterculture.

MPP5-504 FOUCAULT'S THEORY OF POWER IS UNORIGINAL

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.109.

In 'The Subject and Power' (published as an afterword to Dreyfus and Rabinow's book on him) Foucault stated his aim: he wanted to study the 'how' of power, not in the sense of 'how does it manifest itself?' but of 'by what means is it exercised?' But much of what he added to this was commonplace to those familiar with the analytical literature on power from Weber to several contemporary philosophers, political scientists and sociologists. For instance, Foucault 'discloses', rather sententiously, that power properly speaking is really over others, not over things -- it is a matter of domination, not of capacity. He also takes pains to stress that power acts upon our actions, not -- as sheer physical violence -- upon our bodies. 'Power is exercised only over free subjects and only insofar as they are free.' We stand enlightened. In the language of Roman law: *coactus tamen voluit*, i.e., coercion implies freedom. This slightly pompous exercise in elementary definitions boils down to something familiar yet rather tiresome: how often does radical thought, whenever it bothers to exchange rhetoric for reflection, discover long-found Americas!....

MPP5-505 FOUCAULT IGNORES THE REALITY OF CENTRALIZED POWER

Michael Walzer, Princeton, FOUCAULT: A CRITICAL READER, 1986, p.63.

One of Foucault's followers, the author of a very intelligent essay on Discipline and Punish, draws from that book and the related interviews the extraordinary conclusion that the Russian Revolution failed because it 'left intact the social hierarchies and in no way inhibited the functioning of the disciplinary techniques'. Exactly wrong: the Bolsheviks created a new regime that overwhelmed the old hierarchies and enormously expanded and intensified the use of disciplinary techniques. And they did this from the heart of the social system and not from what Foucault likes to call the capillaries, from the centre and not the extremities. Foucault desensitizes his readers to the importance of politics; but politics matters.

MPP5-506 THE STATE IS THE SOURCE OF POWER

Anthony Giddens, Professor of Sociology, Cambridge, PROFILES AND CRITIQUES IN SOCIAL THEORY, 1982, p.223-4

There is a surprising 'absence' at the heart of Foucault's analyses--thus far at any rate--an absence shared with Marxism. It is what I have drawn attention to earlier: an account of the state. In Marx, as I have commented, this lack is in some part to be traced to his involvement with political economy. In Foucault, one suspects, it is related to the very ubiquity of power as discipline. The state is what Foucault describes as the 'calculated technology of subjection' writ large, the disciplinary matrix that oversees the others.

MPP5-507 FOUCAULT'S VIEW OF POWER IS A REDUCTIONISTIC EXPLANATION FOR EVERYTHING
 Anthony Giddens, Professor of Sociology, Cambridge, *PROFILES AND CRITIQUES IN SOCIAL THEORY*, 1982, p.226-7

Power is a secondary phenomenon, to be added in at second reserve. Foucault, and those influenced in a more uninhibited way by Nietzsche, are right to insist that power is chronically and inevitably involved in all social processes. To accept this, I think, is to acknowledge that power and freedom are not inimical; and that power cannot be identified with either coercion or constraint. But I also think it quite wrong to be thereby seduced by a Nietzschean radicalisation of power, which elevates it to the prime position in action and in discourse. Power then becomes a mysterious phenomenon, that hovers everywhere, and underlies everything. I consider it very important to reject the idea that power has primacy over truth, or that meanings and norms can be explicated as congealed or mystified power. A reductionism of power is as faulty as economic or normative reductionisms are.

MPP5-508 FOUCAULT NEGLECTS THE VITAL ISSUE OF WHO HOLDS POWER

Cornel West, Professor of Religion, Harvard, *THE AMERICAN EVASION OF PHILOSOPHY*, 1989, p.225

Edward Said perceptively states regarding Foucault: Yet despite the extraordinary worldliness of this work, Foucault takes a curiously passive and sterile view not so much of the uses of power, but of how and why power is gained, used, and held onto. This is the most dangerous consequence of his disagreement with Marxism, and its result is the least convincing aspect of his work . . . However else power may be a kind of indirect bureaucratic discipline and control, there are ascertainable changes stemming from who holds power and who dominates whom.

MPP5-509 FOUCAULT'S THOUGHT IS NEGATIVE AND IRRATIONALIST

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.156.

Thus Foucault features as highly representative of both the defining elements of neo-anarchism: negativism and irrationalism. Whether this change of heart in anarchy has been for better or for worse is a matter I shall leave to the reader's own judgement. Could it be that modern nihilism visited these traits upon that naive but noble tradition of social thought? Has the ghost of Bakunin, the romantic firebrand who was in his heart a voluptuary of destruction, eventually prevailed over the sane and humane spirit of Kropotkin?

MPP5-510 FOUCAULT'S ANALYSIS IS CIRCULAR

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.106.

At any rate, historical accuracy apart, Foucault's explanations are in themselves vitiated. As Karel Williams shrewdly observed, his kind of analysis tends constantly to be circular; its conclusions are already present at the beginning. In other words, the method is eminently question-begging. Jon Elster has shown that Foucault slips into that 'obsessional' search for meaning' which often underpins pseudoexplanations couched in terms of consequences.

MPP5-511 FOUCAULT IGNORED THE CENTRAL CONCERNS OF THE PRESENT

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.151.

Plaget epitomized his strictures against Foucault by calling his work a 'structuralism without structures'. One could also deplore his cartography of epistemes without epistemology, i.e., without a theory of science. In the end -- and despite all his rhetoric of antihumanism -- the 'humanist' in Foucault carried the day; and because it did, his steps towards a history of the present turned out to be more of a revulsion against modernity than a genuine, objective apprehension of its character. For all their frequent topicality, Foucauldian genealogies have an air of exotica about them. The reason is that they never address the central concerns of our age: science, economics, nationalism and democracy. What 'ontology of the present' can do without them?

MPP5-512 FOUCAULT FAILS AS A HISTORIAN

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.144.

There are, however, two big problems with this appraisal of Foucault. First, his history -- as, I daresay, has been abundantly demonstrated throughout this book -- is far from being always sound. No doubt it often opens up new perspectives and has thereby heuristic virtues. But its conceptual muddles and explanatory weaknesses (and mark: it is always an argumentative history, an *histoire a these*) more than outweigh its real contributions. Foucault's historical evidence is too selective and distorted, his interpretations too sweeping and too biased. Thus in the end, far from counting by itself, as research or insight, his history stands or falls with his *Weltanschauung* -- and therefore falls.

MPP5-513 FOUCAULT'S HISTORICAL FAILINGS AREN'T MINOR

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.153.

Now *L'Impossible prison* is the book by Leonard and others we briefly mentioned above (pages 102-3). The 'very few places' where these historians caught Foucault at loggerheads with the facts are, as we saw, far from unimportant, since they include trifles like the French Revolution or the Code Napoleon. Moreover, to suggest that they systematically misunderstood Foucault's argument is blatantly untrue. Even a cursory reading of Leonard's critical comments, for instance, shows that he grasped the main theses of *Discipline and Punish* quite well. What he did not do was to accept them whole, because his historical data often did not back them up.

MPP5-514 FOUCAULT'S HISTORY OF MADNESS IS INACCURATE

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.27.

In the fifth chapter of his splendid book, *Psycho Politics* (1982), the late Peter Sedgwick pulled the carpet from under several key assumptions in Foucault's historical picture. He showed, for instance, that long before the Great Confinement many insane people had been in custody and undergoing therapy (however primitive) in Europe. There were several hospitals with special accommodation for the mentally ill in towns across the Rhine valley prior to Foucault's classical age. There was a nationwide chain, of charitable asylums, specially for the insane, from the fifteenth century, in, of all places, Spain -- not exactly a society devoted to embracing modern rationalism. Again, various techniques attesting a crude physiological view of mental illness, which in Foucault's model are attributes of the Age of Reason, were actually rife in prerationalist Europe, many stemming from Muslim societies. Dieting, fasting, bleeding and mild rotation (centrifuging the lunatic into oblivion by mechanical means) were some such techniques, most of which dated back from ancient medicine (an epoch, anyway, out of Foucault's purview). Very sensibly, Sedgwick stresses continuities in the medical craft throughout the ages. He does not deny the expansion of the 'medical attitude' under early modern rationalism, but points out that the medical view of madness cannot possibly be simply derived from a pervasive 'bureaucratic rationalism' breaking sharply with an alleged long tradition of permissiveness towards insanity.

MPP5-515 PSYCHIATRIC CONFINEMENT WASN'T AN EXPRESSION OF REASON

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.29.

Indeed, his grim tale of high-minded medical tyranny is by no means wholly supported by the actual record of therapy in the age of the asylum. David Rothman, a social historian who did innovative research on the development of mental institutions in Jacksonian America, . documented a mid-nineteenth-century withdrawal from psychiatric to merely custodial methods (*The Discovery of the Asylum*, 1971). Rothman's story chimes perfectly well with the 'therapeutic nihilism' of the age -- the medical reluctance to pass from diagnosis to treatment, based on a pessimistic view of medicine's powers (the young Freud, half a century later, still had to fight this medical ideology, long entrenched in Vienna). Now Rothman is by no means suggesting that the custodial (as opposed to the psychiatric) asylum was a good thing. On the contrary, he sees the custodial spirit as tied up with early bourgeois control of 'dangerous' social categories. But if he is right, then what was 'on' as a repressive phenomenon concerning insanity was a medical passivity, not the busybody psychiatry that Foucault wants to present as a handmaid of a despotically interventionist, regimenting Reason.

MPP5-516 PRE-RATIONALIST SOCIETY WAS ALSO CRUEL TO THE INSANE

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.28.

H.C. Erik Midelfort has assembled a number of historical points which further undermine much of the ground of Madness and Civilization." Midelfort has no quarrel in principle with Foucault's unmasking of the Enlightenment, and so is far from writing as an outraged defender of any rosy chronicle of heroic therapeutic advances. But he also evinces a formidable command of an impressive literature on the history of both madness and psychiatry. I can only invite the interested reader to go to Midelfort's brilliant synthesis and glean from his rich bibliographic support. But a number of points are worth making at once: (1) there is ample evidence of medieval cruelty towards the insane; (2) in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the mad were already often confined, to cells, jails or even cages.

MPP5-517 FOUCAULT'S THEORY OF THE PRISON FAILS HISTORICALLY

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.101-2.

Read as a Nietzschean or Marxo-Nietzschean countercultural manifesto, *Discipline and Punish* makes engrossing partisan history; but how does it read as history tout court? Let us turn to the historians' judgement. Take a recent, well researched work on executions and the evolution of repression: *The Spectacle of Suffering* by Pieter Spierenburg, of Erasmus University in Rotterdam. Following Norbert Elias's pioneering way of correlating moral and institutional changes, Spierenburg states (p. viii) that Foucault does not inquire into the translation from one penal system into another, does not explain the changes in modes of repression by relating them to other social developments and does not base his analysis of public executions on archival sources. Flatly warning that 'the infliction of pain and the public character of punishment did not disappear overnight', he reckons 'Foucault's picture [...] actually far from historical reality' (ibid). Lack of archival support is particularly conspicuous, according to Spierenburg (p. 108), in Foucault's thesis about the 'political danger' inherent in public executions, the danger of rioting beyond control, which he deems the cause of their eventual disappearance.

MPP5-518 FOUCAULT IGNORES KEY EVENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRISON

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.102.

More generally, from a critical historiographic viewpoint, *Discipline and Punish* seems flawed on three scores. First, Foucault seems to get some of his most important facts wrong. Historians have complained, for instance, that the whole revolutionary period is largely absent from Foucault's story. Maybe he was too uncompromising in his (structuralist) distaste for the history of events (despite his flirtation with that notion in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*); but be that as it may, his silence on the French Revolution as a specific, phase in penal history led him to overlook its role in key changes.

MPP5-519 FOUCAULT'S HISTORY OF THE PRISON OVERSIMPLIFIED

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, FOUCAULT, 1985, p.98.

There is, of course, more than a grain of truth in both scenarios. But Foucault's view of the whole process is simply too Manichaean. Why should the historian choose between the angelic image of a demoliberal bourgeois order, unstained by class domination, and the hellish picture of ubiquitous coercion? Is not the actual historical record a mixed one, showing real libertarian and equalizing trends beside several configurations of class power and coercive cultural traits?

MPP5-520 FOUCAULT'S DETERMINISM LEAVES NO SCOPE FOR EFFECTIVE MORAL OR POLITICAL ACTION

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.41-2.

New Historicism inherits this dead-end predicament without the least sign of acknowledging its problematic character. That is to say, it follows Foucault in reducing all questions of knowledge, judgment and ethics to the level of an intra-discursive force-field, an agonistic play of resistances or power/knowledge effects where the subject is just a ghost in the linguistic machine, an epiphenomenon of discourse. Nor is it in any way fortuitous that in drawing out the aporias of Foucault's position one is led to invoke these Cartesian metaphors and echoes of Gilbert Ryle on Descartes. For there is a similar problem with Foucault: how to overcome the deep-laid conflict that exists between a thoroughgoing determinism as applied to the body and its various disciplinary-discursive regimes, and the necessary margin of free-will required to envisage any ethics or politics worth the name.

MPP5-521 FOUCAULT'S VIEW OF REASON UNDERMINES CONSTRUCTIVE CHANGE

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.42.

But his case appears much less convincing if one asks, with Habermas, what reasons Foucault can offer - factual, ethical, or principled reasons - for bringing that history to book (so to speak) as an instance of certain determinate abuses in the discourse of oppressive instrumental rationality. For he is working with so impoverished a notion of 'reason' - and so minimal a conception of the subject - that there seems no alternative to the power/knowledge nexus that defines every aspect of human social interaction. In short, Foucault deprives himself of any normative (i.e., reasoned and principled) grounds on which to mount his otherwise passionate case as regards the great legacy of suffering, injustice, and human waste brought about by such specific perversions of the rationalist project. In Habermasian terms he fails to distinguish between the various spheres of reason - instrumental (problem-solving), ethico-political, aesthetic or 'world-disclosive', etc. - and hence fails to see how encroachments by the first on to the others' domain may result in just the kinds of large-scale abuse that his texts so persistently denounce. By reducing 'reason' to its lowest common denominator (instrumental rationality) Foucault in effect closes off any prospect of progressive or emancipatory change.

MPP5-522 FOUCAULT'S THEORY OF POWER IS A POLITICAL DEAD END

Robert Hughes, critic and historian, CULTURE OF COMPLAINT, 1993, p.75-6.

'To this was joined the belief of French poststructuralism, exemplified by Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, that the "subject"--the thinking, single agent, the "I" of every sentence -- was an illusion: all you had left was language, not mentality: frustration with pervasive systems of repressive undecidability written everywhere in the surrounding culture, but no means of overcoming it. Once there were writers, but now there is only what Foucault derisively called "the author function." The intellectual, under these conditions, is thought to be as helpless against power and control as a salmon in a polluted stream, the only difference being that we, unlike the fish, know the water is poisoned. Thus, by the theory, we are not in control of our own history and never can be. We hold it true that truth is unknowable; we must suspect all utterances, except the axiom that all utterances are suspect. It would be difficult to find a worse -- or more authoritarian -- dead end than this. John Diggins, in *The Rise and Fall of the American Left*, puts it in a nutshell: 'today the intellectual's challenge is not the Enlightenment one of furthering knowledge to advance freedom: the challenge now is to spread suspicion. The influence French poststructuralism enjoys in American academic life . . . answers a deep need, if only the need to rationalize failure.'

MPP5-523 REFORM CAN BE MEANINGFUL

Anthony Giddens, Professor of Sociology, Cambridge, *PROFILES AND CRITIQUES IN SOCIAL THEORY*, 1982, p.223

Foucault says of the prison that 'prison reform' is born together with the prison itself: it is part of its very programme. But the same point could be made, and in less ironic vein, about various of the political and economic transformations introduced with the collapse of feudalism. Liberalism is not the same as despotism, absolutism or totalitarianism, and the bourgeois ethos of rational, universalised justice has the same double-edged character as prisons and their reform. With this major difference: prisoners are denied just those rights which the remainder of the population formally possess. Taken together, freedom of contract and freedom to organize politically have helped generate the rise of labour movements that have been both a challenge to, and a powerful force for change within, the political and economic orders of capitalism.

MPP5-524 FOUCAULT'S SKEPTICISM UNDERMINES EFFECTIVE POLITICAL PRACTICE

Cornel West, Professor of Religion, Harvard, *THE AMERICAN EVASION OF PHILOSOPHY*, 1989, p.226

Foucault rightly wants to safeguard relentless criticism and healthy skepticism, yet his rejection of even tentative aims and provisional ends results in existential rebellion or micropolitical revolt rather than concerted political praxis informed by moral vision and systemic (though flexible) analysis. In stark contrast, prophetic pragmatists take seriously moral discourse—revisable means and ends of political action, the integrity and character of those engaged, and the precious ideals of participatory democracy and the flowering of the uniqueness of different human individualities.

MPP5-525 LACK OF AN ALTERNATIVE MAKES FOUCAULT'S VIEWS REACTIONARY

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.148.

Habermas sees himself, as well as Rawls in America, as examples of rational progressivist thought; but he does not balk at dubbing thinkers like Foucault, Deleuze and Lyotard 'neo-conservative', since they lack all theoretical justification of an alternative to the social status quo in advanced capitalism.

MPP5-526 FOUCAULT'S CRITIQUE OF THE SUBJECT RENDERED HIS POLITICS INCOHERENT

Bernard-Henri Levy, French philosopher, *ADVENTURES ON THE FREEDOM ROAD*, 1995, p.343

Luc Ferry was certainly right when he criticised the anti-humanism of the sixties from the lofty perspective of certain immutable principles. He was also right to point out that an anti-humanistic hatred of the "subject" and of all discourse relating to him condemns in some respects the eponymous figures associated with philosophy at that time. He expressed his regret that French thought became bogged down for so long in such barren and sterile territory, in which the concept of a free man as a subject under the law and a citizen of a secular and democratic society were, from a theoretical point of view, almost inconceivable; and I understand what he meant in pursuing his analysis and seeking to establish the common ground between all the different strands of thought which were current in '68. He wasn't totally wrong in believing he had identified a "French form of Nietzsche", the influence of which had been all the more secret and pernicious since it had not been openly expressed. I accept all that he said, particularly because I was aware of what happened subsequently. I witnessed the kinds of impasses in which people found themselves, and even experienced some of them myself. I saw Michel Foucault tie himself in all kinds of knots in a laudable but pathetic attempt to go on defending the rights of gays, prisoners, immigrants, and other oppressed minorities as human beings -- having begun to question the very existence of human beings as such.

MPP5-527 DISCIPLINE PERVADES ALL SOCIETY—SMALL REFORMS ONLY POSSIBILITY

Michael Walzer, Princeton, *FOUCAULT: A CRITICAL READER*, 1986, p.60.

But what other victories can he think possible, given his strategic knowledge? Consider:

1. that discipline-in-detail, the precise control of behaviour, is necessary to the (unspecified) large-scale features of contemporary social and economic life;
2. that this kind of control requires the micro-setting, the finely meshed network, the local power relation, represented in ideal-typical fashion by the cellular structure of the prison, the daily timetable of prison events, the extra-legal penalties inflicted by prison authorities, the face-to-face encounters of guard and prisoner;
3. that the prison is only one small part of a highly articulated, mutually reinforcing carceral continuum extending across society, in which all of us are implicated, and not only as captives or victims;
4. and finally, that the complex of disciplinary mechanisms and institutions constitutes and is constituted by the contemporary human sciences—an argument that runs through all of Foucault's work, to which I will return. Physical disciplines and intellectual disciplines are radically entangled; the carceral continuum is validated by the knowledge of human subjects that it makes possible.

Given all this — leave aside for the moment whether it adds up to a fully satisfactory account of our social life — how can Foucault expect anything more than a small reform here or there, an easing of disciplinary rigour, the introduction of more humane, if no less effective methods?

MPP5-528 FOUCAULT MAKES RESISTANCE IMPOSSIBLE

H.F. Haber, Asst. Philosophy Prof., U. Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.101-2.

But if, as this thesis implies, individuals are wholly constituted by the power/knowledge regime Foucault describes, how can discipline be resisted in the first place? (Unless it comes about as an inevitable moment in the march of . . . but no, this is a very unfoucauldian thesis.) If individuals are wholly constituted by the power/knowledge regime, then it would make no sense to talk about resistance to discipline. As Sandra Lee Bartky notes, Foucault seems sometimes on the verge of depriving us of a vocabulary in which to conceptualize the nature and meaning of resistance. And where he suggests the possibility of an alternative vocabulary, his thesis that individuals "with his identity and characteristics [are] the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires, forces" must leave us skeptical about the possibility of alternative vocabularies. If the subject is "constituted through practices of subjugation," then what sense can we make of the claim that it is also constituted "through practices of liberation, of freedom . . . starting, of course, from a certain number of rules, styles, and conventions that are found in the culture"? This grossly begs the question: how does one start from the rules, styles, and conventions of a disciplinary and normalizing culture and end up with practices of liberation and freedom? Foucault never provides us with the missing steps, and in fact, has given us powerful reasons to suppose practices of "liberation" and "freedom" — even if these are liberations from one power regime to another — are impossible. The difficulty of finding the possibility of a revolutionary vocabulary is not a problem peculiar to Foucault; it haunts many revolutionary proponents of poststructuralist politics.

MPP5-529 FOUCAULT NIHILISTIC

Michael Walzer, Princeton, FOUCAULT: A CRITICAL READER, 1986, p.613.

At this last passage suggest, when Foucault is an anarchist, he is a moral as well as a political anarchist. For him morality and politics go together. Guilt and innocence are the products of law just as normality and abnormality are the products of discipline. To abolish power systems is to abolish both moral and scientific categories: away with them all! But what will be left? Foucault does not believe, as earlier anarchists did, that the free human subject is a subject of a certain sort, naturally good, warmly sociable, kind and loving. Rather, there is for him no such thing as a free human subject, no natural man or woman. Men and women are always social creations, the products of codes and disciplines. And so Foucault's radical abolitionism, if it is serious, is not anarchist so much as nihilist. For on his own arguments, either there will be nothing left at all, nothing visibly human; or new codes and disciplines will be produced, and Foucault gives us no reason to expect that these will be any better than the ones we now live with. Nor, for that matter, does he give us any way of knowing what 'better' might mean.

MPP5-530 FOUCAULT'S PERSPECTIVE IS NIHILISTIC

David Couzens Hoy, Professor of Philosophy, University of California-Santa Cruz, FOUCAULT: A CRITICAL READER, 1986, p.10

By denying the possibility of an independent standpoint, Foucault appears to such critics to be not simply a functionalist, but a nihilistic, fatalistic one. Thus Walzer interprets Foucault as a functionalist who presupposes that society is a whole governed by an invisible hand rather than by an accountable, legitimate state power and a rational rule of law. As an anarchist, Foucault is said to disavow any political structure but also any human nature that could persist without social systems. So Foucault seems to believe that social improvement is impossible short of abolishing modern society altogether. But Walzer thinks that this radical abolitionism is nihilistic because 'either there will be nothing left at all, nothing visibly human; or new codes and disciplines will be produced, and Foucault gives us no reason to expect that these will be any better than the ones we now live with. Nor, for that matter, does he give us any way of knowing what "better" might mean.'

MPP5-531 IN REJECTING UNIVERSALISM, FOUCAULT LACKS ANY MORAL BASIS FOR HIS POLITICS

Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, Professors of Philosophy and anthropology, University of California Berkeley, FOUCAULT: A CRITICAL READER, David Couzens Hoy, ed., 1986, p.113

But, Habermas asks how can Foucault legitimately make such normative judgements once he has defined maturity as the relinquishing of dependence on the authority of law, religion and science as well as formal universal claims put forward by philosophers? From Habermas's point of view, Foucault's propounding a political theory without justification must be pure decisionism.

MPP5-532 FOUCAULT DEVALUES MORAL DISCOURSE

Cornel West, Professor of Religion, Harvard, THE AMERICAN EVASION OF PHILOSOPHY, 1989, p.226

The last prophetic pragmatist criticism of Foucault's project is that he devalues moral discourse. His fervent anti-utopianism—again in reaction to Hegelian and Marxist teleological utopianisms — rejects all forms of ends and aims for political struggle. Therefore, he replaces reform or revolution with revolt and rebellion. In this way, Foucault tends to reduce left ethics to a bold and defiant Great Refusal addressed to the dominant powers that be. Yet by failing to articulate and elaborate ideals of democracy, equality, and freedom, Foucault provides solely negative conceptions of critique and resistance. He rightly suspects the self-authorizing and self-privileging aims of "universal" intellectuals who put forward such ideals, yet he mistakenly holds that any attempt to posit these ideals as guides to political action and social reconstruction must fall prey to new modes of subjection and disciplinary control.

MPP5-533 FOUCAULT'S PHILOSOPHY ENDS IN INEFFECTUAL NIHILISM

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.185-6.

There can be little doubt that Foucault was a humane man, viscerally concerned about the injustices that existed in the world, and frequently prepared to act militantly in defense of human rights. But he offers no basic philosophy for his actions and in many ways vitiates the emergence of one. As a critic of power he in fact leaves us quite powerless to change our fate, and foresees, along with Nietzsche, not only the end of God but the end of man. His explicit antihumanism, his rejection of the potentialities opened by the Enlightenment, his ahistoricism, and his treatment of truth as a 'regime' of domination are too debilitating in their social effects to support the image of the engaged French intellectual. He drifted from Stalinism to Maoism to a life-style anarchism - more properly, nihilism within a span of only two decades. It is as a defining thinker of poststructuralism and postmodernism that his basic ideas are of concern here.

MPP5-534 FOUCAULT'S CRITIQUE FAILS BECAUSE HE LACKS NORMATIVE STANDARDS

David Couzens Hoy, Professor of Philosophy, University of California-Santa Cruz, *FOUCAULT: A CRITICAL READER*, 1986, p.8

Habermas contends that Foucault's critique of modernity fails because Foucault loses his sense of direction. This loss occurs because Foucault is both a 'crypto-normativist' and an 'irrationalist'. The former label applies because Foucault cannot explain the standards Habermas thinks must be presupposed in any condemnation of the present. Habermas cites Nancy Fraser's pointed questions, 'Why is struggle preferable to submission? Why ought domination to be resisted? Only with the introduction of normative notions of some kind could Foucault begin to answer this question. Only with the introduction of normative notions could he begin to tell us what is wrong with the modern power/knowledge regime and why we ought to oppose it.'

MPP5-535 FOUCAULT EXAGGERATED THE IDEA OF SOCIAL DISCIPLINE

J.G. Merquior, Professor of Political Science, University of Brasilia, *FOUCAULT*, 1985, p.103.

Leonard puts his finger on at least three further omissions. First, Foucault does not distinguish between different categories of prisoners (political prisoners, murderers, workers, recalcitrant military, prostitutes, etc.), any more than he undertakes a sociology of judges and lawyers. Secondly, Foucault overstates the actual effects of 'normalization' in French society during the first half of the last century. The historian of the army, the historian of education and the historian of medicine can hardly buy Foucault's picture of an all- pervasive discipline: they are too much aware of the resistance of old customs and of the frequent impotence of so many regulations. Again, research in the history of work tends seriously to qualify Foucault's 'Taylorist' description of normalized industrial activity: France was still overwhelmingly a peasant and craft economy, and took a long time before adopting a full splitting of industrial tasks within factories. Finally, it may be argued, Foucault does not stress enough the religious origin and motivation of many a technique of drill or rite of exclusion belonging to his catalogue of disciplines.

MPP5-536 FOUCAULT FALSELY GENERALIZES FROM PRISON TO SOCIETY AT LARGE

Anthony Giddens, Professor of Sociology, Cambridge, *PROFILES AND CRITIQUES IN SOCIAL THEORY*, 1982, p.222-3

Foucault draws too close an association between the prison and the factory. There is no doubt that prisons were in part consciously looked to as models by some employers in the early years of capitalism in their search for the consolidation of labour discipline. Unfree labour was actually sometimes used. But there are two essential differences between the prison and the factory. 'Work' only makes up one sector, albeit normally the most time consuming one, of the daily life of individuals outside prisons. For the capitalistic work-place is not, as prisons are, and clinics and hospitals may be, a 'total institution', in Goffman's term. More important, the worker is not forcibly incarcerated in the factory or office, but enters the gates of the work-place as 'free wage-labour'. This gives rise to the historically peculiar problems of the 'management' of a labour force that is formally 'free', analysed interestingly by Pollard among others. At the same time, it opens the way for forms of worker resistance (especially unionisation and the threat of collective withdrawal of labour) that are not part of the normal enactment of prison discipline. The 'docile bodies' which Foucault says discipline produces turn out very often to be not so docile at all.

MPP5-537 DISCIPLINE ENHANCES FREEDOM TO SOCIETY

Charles Taylor, McGill philosopher, *FOUCAULT: A CRITICAL READER*, 1986, p.81-2.

But Foucault has missed the ambivalence of these new disciplines. The point is, they have not only served to feed a system of control; they have also taken the form of genuine self-disciplines which have made possible new kinds of collective action characterized by more egalitarian forms of participation. This is not a new discovery. It is a truism of the civic humanist tradition of political theory that free participatory institutions require some commonly accepted self-disciplines. The free citizen has the virtue to give willingly the contribution which otherwise the despot would coerce from him, perhaps in some other form. Without this, free institutions cannot exist. There is a tremendous difference between societies which find their cohesion through such common disciplines grounded on a public identity, and which thus permit of and call for the participatory action of equals, on one hand, and the multiplicity of kinds of society which require chains of command based on unquestionable authority on the other.

MPP5-538 FOUCAULT PRESERVES PATRIARCHY - PREVENTS EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

H.F. Haber, Asst. Philosophy Prof., U. Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.108.

When Lyotard and Foucault deny the possibility of coherent subjects, when they repudiate consensus and community, it can be argued that their postmodern theories merely reproduce the effects of enlightenment theories; the result of theories which deconstruct subjects is to deny the marginalized to participate in defining their interests, goals, desires—to construct a new voice. Foucault emphasizes, and sometimes totalizes, the repressive effects of power (critique or theory) at the expense of its potential for liberation (construction), and this deemphasis on liberatory practices makes him suspect from the perspective of the disempowered. In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault characterizes confessional practices which aim at self-disclosure and self-discovery as aiding the interests of domination and social control. Indeed, as Jana Sawicki notes, "Foucault was suspicious of most efforts to tell the truth about one-self."

MPP5-539 FOUCAULT PATRIARCHAL - HURT WOMEN'S STRUGGLE

H.F. Haber, Asst. Philosophy Prof., U. Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.105-6.

And yet he doesn't always go this far. It is also clear that Foucault sees himself as participating in the formation of oppositional consciousness—in the formation of the consciousness of oppositional subjects—and that he sees such subjects as necessary for the project of the instantiation of new regimes of power formed from the standpoint of subjugated knowledges. Unfortunately, where he allows for agents of struggle, these agents are "subjects" in an uncomfortably familiar sense of the word, and despite his advances over Rorty, this signifies yet another of those totalizing impulses which mask the viewpoint of the bourgeois male. There are (even if he doesn't say how—and this points to tensions which can be said to exist between Foucault's modern and postmodern tendencies) times in Foucault's writings where he posits the existence of subjects coherent enough to form coalitions, some of which coalitions will even, he says, be "permanent" [sic]. But, as he sees it, the first and last components of these coalitions will be "individuals," and this doesn't get us away from the bourgeois individualism which has dominated modern patriarchal, racist, and classist power regimes. It also does not, therefore, adequately reflect how we come to achieve the self-consciousness necessary for oppositional political struggle. On this point Lacanian theory proves instructive. It helps feminist theory articulate the ways in which the very notion of the subject is a masculine prerogative within the terms of culture. As Judith Butler notes, The paternal law which Lacanian psychoanalysis takes to be the ground of all kinship and all cultural relations not only sanctions male subjects, but institutes their very possibility through the denial of the feminine. hence, far from being subjects, women are variously, the Other, a mysterious and irrecoverable lack, a sign of the forbidden and irrecoverable maternal body, or some unsavory mixture of the above.

MPP5-540 FOUCAULT'S THOUGHT IS ULTIMATELY UTOPIAN

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.196.

In view of his rejection of the present in all its forms, and his related rejection of the visual, representational metaphor, Foucault is perhaps best regarded as the exponent of an unaccustomed form of utopianism. I have used the term utopian before, in relation to both Nietzsche and Heidegger. It is essential that I say something about this term now, especially since the utopian moment is much more obvious in Foucault than it is in either of his predecessors. By utopian I mean an orientation that carries idealism, in Berki's sense, to the furthest degree.

MPP5-541 FOUCAULT IS A RADICAL UTOPIAN

Alan Megill, University of Iowa, *PROPHETS OF EXTREMITY*, 1985, p.265.

The alienation of Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Foucault from "the modern age" is beyond question: in one way or another, they all want to make a leap into a utopia that radically negates this reality. Radical dereliction and radical utopianism go together. Art best exercises its ex nihilo creativity where there is a nullity out of which this creation can emerge.

MPP5-542 FOUCAULT OFFERS NO ALTERNATIVE MORAL STANDARD

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM*, 1994, p.35.

Hence, as several commentators have noted, the curious conjunction in Foucault's work of a passionate address to issues of social injustice with a flat refusal to provide that work with any normative basis for judgments of truth and falsehood (or right and wrong) beyond the idea of localized strategic intervention. All that is left, as in *Madness and Civilization*, is an ill-defined notion of absolute alterity - of the excluded or marginalized 'other' - whose locus shifts successively from text to text as Foucault engages the various 'discourses' of psychiatry, criminology, penal institutions, confessional practices, gender-role enforcement, and so forth.

MPP5-543 FOUCAULT CAN'T EVADE THE LOGICAL ORDER HE SEEKS TO TRANSCEND

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE POLITICS OF BEING*, 1990, p.233.

As we have seen, in his critique of *History of Madness* Derrida points out that Foucault is, by his own argument, trapped within "logocentrism," within the general historical guilt borne by Western language. For whatever his claims to be resurrecting the silent language of an oppressed madness, Foucault continues to speak the language of the very reason that carried out the oppression in the first place. In short, he is still caught within the all-powerful order that he is seeking to evade. Thus, the radicalism of Foucault's critique of psychiatry is called into question.

MPP5-544 FOUCAULT OFFERS NO ALTERNATIVE TO THE WESTERN TRADITION

Alan Megill, University of Iowa, *PROPHETS OF EXTREMITY*, 1985, p.256.

There is nothing to prevent Foucault from moving off in a different direction in the future. Still, most of his work to date is best summed up under the dual headings of utopianism and crisis. He is clearly an enemy of the dominant, Western tradition. A major problem with his attack on the tradition, however, is his inability to specify what we have outside it.

MPP5-545 FOUCAULT'S LANGUAGE IS INCOMMENSURATE WITH THE LANGUAGE OF SCIENTIFIC TRUTH

Alan Megill, University of Iowa, *PROPHETS OF EXTREMITY*, 1985, p.250.

What does seem clear, however, is that Foucault's denial of the objectivity of science cannot be logically refuted: having adopted the language of power-knowledge, he has taken up residence within a self-consistent rhetoric. And looking at things from the other direction, the notion of an objective science--to which many others besides Marx have adhered--cannot be convincingly established for those who have rejected the language within which this notion exists. At best, lacunae within each language can be pointed out; each language speaks about certain things while failing to speak about certain other things.

MPP5-546 DERRIDA IS THE CHARACTERISTIC POSTMODERN THINKER

Richard Bernstein, Professor of Philosophy, New School for Social Research, *WORKING THROUGH DERRIDA*, Gary Madison, ed., 1993, p.206.

Derrida, who rarely even mentions "modernity" or "postmodernity," is nevertheless taken to be the "postmodern" thinker par excellence.

MPP5-547 POSTMODERNISM IS A MOVEMENT OF UNMASKING

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.206.

Unlike Jean-Francois Lyotard, Derrida has intentionally avoided associating deconstruction with the postmodern turn in criticism and the arts. Nevertheless, it would be difficult to deny that his thinking coincides in several crucial respects with what might be called the "anticivilizational ethos" of postmodern culture; "anticivilizational" inasmuch as it remains convinced that the dominant values of modern culture--self-positing subjectivity, ethical universalism, and, more generally, the tyranny of holistic thinking--have failed us profoundly and are in need of a radical "unmaking." It is in this spirit that, in an interesting commentary on the postmodern situation, Ihab Hassan has aptly characterized postmodernism as a movement of "unmaking": It is an antinomian moment that assumes a vast unmaking in the Western mind -- what Michel Foucault might call a post-modern episteme. I say "unmaking" though other terms are now de rigueur: for instance, deconstruction, decentering, disappearance, dissemination, demystification, discontinuity, différance, dispersion, etc. Such terms express an ontological rejection of the traditional full subject, the cogito of Western philosophy. They express, too, an epistemological obsession with fragments or fractures, and a corresponding ideological commitment to minorities in politics, sex and language. To think well, to feel well, to act well, to read well, according to the episteme of unmaking, is to refuse the tyranny of wholes; totalization in any human endeavor is potentially totalitarian.

MPP5-548 DECONSTRUCTION DEFINED

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.18-19.

Let us pursue this via negativa and ask more specifically just why deconstruction is neither 'method' on the one hand nor interpretation' on the other. In fact it is not too difficult to come up with a concise formula that would make it sound very much like a 'method' and yet describe quite accurately some of Derrida's most typical deconstructive moves. What these consist in, very briefly, is the dismantling of conceptual oppositions, the taking apart of hierarchical systems of thought which can then be reinscribed within a different order of textual signification. Or again: deconstruction is the vigilant seeking-out of those 'aporias', blindspots or moments of self-contradiction where a text involuntarily betrays the tension between rhetoric and logic, between what it manifestly means to say and what it is nonetheless constrained to mean. To 'deconstruct' a piece of writing is therefore to operate a kind of strategic reversal, seizing on precisely those unregarded details (casual metaphors, footnotes, incidental turns of argument) which are always, and necessarily, passed over by interpreters of a more orthodox persuasion. For it is here, in the margins of the text -- the 'margins', that is, as defined by a powerful normative consensus -- that deconstruction discovers those same unsettling forces at work. So there is at least a certain *prima facie* case for the claim that deconstruction is a 'method' of reading with its own specific rules and protocols. And indeed, as we shall see, the above brief account of Derrida's deconstructive strategy does provide at least a fair working notion of what goes on in his texts.

MPP5-549 FOR DERRIDA UNDERSTANDING MUST ALWAYS FOCUS ON LANGUAGE OR DISCOURSE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.11.

Semiotics calls to our attention the fact that we never encounter bare physical objects or uninterpreted data. We always and necessarily encounter objects and events already endowed with meaning. In other words, what we encounter are signs; we don't have objects on the one hand and thoughts or meanings on the other; it is rather that we have signs everywhere. If we wish to understand our social and cultural world we must examine the network of relations which endow objects and events with meaning. Since language, be it written (Saussure) or spoken (the point of Derridian difference), is the primordial medium of an object, objects have meaning in virtue of their inscription in the linguistic network, or "signifying chain." This being the case, the objects of any science must be studied within the domain of discourse.

MPP5-550 ACCORDING TO DERRIDA, THE WESTERN METAPHYSICAL TRADITION ENTRENCHES POLITICAL ENMITY

Mark Lillia, Professor of Politics, New York University, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, June 25, 1998, p.38.

Because our metaphysical tradition teaches that man is identical to himself, a coherent personality free from internal difference, we have been encouraged to seek our identities through membership in undifferentiated, homogenizing groups such as families, friendships, classes, and nations. From Aristotle to the French Revolution, the good republic has therefore been thought to require fraternite, which is idealized as a natural blood tie making separate individuals somehow one. But there is no such thing as natural fraternity, Derrida asserts, just as there is no natural maternity (sic). All such natural categories, as well as the derivative concepts of community, culture, nation, and borders, are dependent on language and therefore are conventions. The problem with these conventions is not simply that they cover up differences within the presumably identical entities. It is that they also establish hierarchies among them: between brothers and sisters, citizens and foreigners, and eventually friends and enemies.

MPP5-551 DERRIDA DEFENDS THE VALUE OF JUSTICE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, LABYRINTHS, 1995, p.233.

Nevertheless, in his own defense Derrida has always insisted that "discourses on double affirmation, the gift beyond exchange and distribution, the undecidable, the incommensurable or the incalculable, or on singularity, difference and heterogeneity are also, through and through, at least obliquely discourses on justice, [ethics and politics]." And in response to one critic's accusation that "deconstruction is so obsessed with the play of difference that it ultimately ends up indifferent to everything," Derrida insists that "deconstruction is not an enclosure in nothingness but an openness towards the other"; in this openness it seeks to "reevaluate the indispensable notion of responsibility" in ways that are fraught with ethical and political consequences. Elsewhere he does not shy away from immodestly insisting: "Deconstruction is justice.... I know nothing more just than what I call deconstruction." And further: "Deconstruction is mad about this kind of justice. Mad about the desire for justice."

MPP5-552 DERRIDA ACCEPTS THAT JUSTICE CANNOT BE DECONSTRUCTED

Mark Lillia, Professor of Politics, New York University, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, June 25, 1998, p.39.

Readers of Derrida's early works can be forgiven for assuming that he believes there can be no escape from language, and therefore no escape from deconstruction for any of our concepts. His achievement, after all, was to have established this hard truth, which was the only truth he did not question. But now Jacques Derrida has changed his mind, and in a major way. It turns out that there is a concept -- though only one -- resilient enough to withstand the acids of deconstruction. That concept is justice.

MPP5-553 FOR DERRIDA, DECONSTRUCTION DOESN'T UNDERCUT JUSTICE

Mark Lillia, Professor of Politics, New York University, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, June 25, 1998, p.39.

In the fall of 1989 Derrida was invited to address a symposium in New York on the theme "deconstruction and the possibility of justice." His lecture has now been expanded in a French edition and published along with an essay on Walter Benjamin. Derrida's aim in the lecture is to demonstrate that although deconstruction can and should be applied to the law, it cannot and should not be taken to undercut the notion of justice.

MPP5-554 DERRIDA REJECTS ETHNOCENTRISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM, 1992, p.206.

Unsurprisingly, several terms of Derridean provenance -- deconstruction, dissemination, and difference -- figure prominently in Hassan's description. Indeed, the general affinities between Hassan's characterization and Derrida's project are far from superficial. For from his earliest works, Derrida explicitly ties deconstruction to a certain demystification of Western ethnocentrism, which is based on the primacy of metaphysics qua logocentrism -- "the imperialism of the logos," "the scientificity of science."

MPP5-555 ROUSSEAU-STYLE ORIGIN MYTHS ARE ULTIMATELY AUTHORITARIAN

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.198.

We have seen how similar questions emerge in Derrida's reading of Rousseau, especially those passages from the Social Contract which seek to formulate political ideals in a language of pre-social nature and origins. What Derrida wants to bring out is the moment of authoritarian appeal -- the recourse to an ultimate, legitimizing power -- involved in all such fabulous myths of origin.

MPP5-556 DECONSTRUCTION OFFERS AN EFFECTIVE CRITIQUE OF ROUSSEAU

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.126.

Derrida's response might be taken to run as follows. The Rousseauist mythology of origins and presence is one that appeals to a human nature which would somehow preexist all conceivable forms of organized civil society. Though harnessed initially to a progressive current of ideas, it proved in the long run a very useful support for those conservative philosophies which held out against the disruptive effects of modern (enlightened) thinking. Rousseau's perpetual harking back to origins was a denial of everything that belonged on the side of reason, progress and history itself. 'The expression "primitive times", and all the evidence which will be used to describe them, refer to no date, no event, no chronology' (p. 252). And this because it is literally impossible to think one's way back -- as Rousseau would have us think -- to the pre-social origins of society, the pre-linguistic origins of language, etc. All that remains is a pure mythology devoid of any reasoned or historical substance.

MPP5-557 DECONSTRUCTION HELPS TO UNDERMINE THE CONSERVATIVE APPROPRIATION OF ROUSSEAU
Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.127

For it is only through writing and its cultural effects that Rousseau can think the origins of language, society and civil institutions. Logocentrism -- or the Rousseauist 'metaphysics of presence' -- is the desire not to recognize this order of necessity inscribed in the texts of Western tradition from Plato to the structuralist sciences of man. It is a desire that would finally erase all the traces of historical, social and sexual difference in order to dream a presence beyond their bad, disruptive effects. And this is why Rousseau's arguments can always be recaptured by a certain conservative mystique of nature and origins. Only by reading his texts deconstructively -- by showing how they are haunted by writing in the form of a generalized 'political unconscious' -- can criticism hope to resist this powerful and still very active mystique.

MPP5-558 DECONSTRUCTION PROVES THE INCOMPETENCE OF NUCLEAR EXPERTS

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.164.

There is simply no reckoning with the multiplied chances of error and misinterpretation that are opened up by each new gambit in the nuclear game. So those 'experts' who decisively influence such far-reaching changes of policy are nonetheless incompetent to grasp what is at stake or to calculate the likely outcome. Their knowledge is an obsolete knowledge, failing to recognize the extent to which nuclear 'reality' has entered the realm of apocalyptic fantasy. What counts in strategic or deterrent terms is not so much the destructive capacity of weapons or the superior logic of tactical reasoning on either side. Rather, it is the power to raise the fantasy stakes to a point where rival interpretations are effectively played off the field.

MPP5-559 DECONSTRUCTION IS RELEVANT TO NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.163.

To gain some idea of what this might mean in practice I want to look briefly at the text of a paper that Derrida delivered at a 1983 conference on so-called 'nuclear criticism'. Here he puts forward a number of seemingly extravagant claims for the pertinence of deconstruction as a strategy for thinking within and against the 'logic' of nuclear deterrence. There is, Derrida argues, a sense in which deconstruction is peculiarly fitted to press these questions beyond the present stalemate, the paralysis of reason, engendered by the nuclear threat. For one thing, 'deterrence' is a word for which there exists no adequate concept, no place within a system of coherent or intelligible thinking that would make proper sense of it in any given context. Of course this predicament is one which, according to Derrida, extends to every form of discourse whose rhetorical complexity exceeds its own powers of presumptive control over language. (Which is indeed to say, quite simply, every form of discourse.) Deconstruction points to those blind-spots of argument where a text generates aberrant meanings or chains of disruptive implication that work to undermine its manifest 'logical' sense. It would hardly be surprising if the claims and counter-claims of current nuclear doublethink turned out to exemplify such blindness in a specially striking form.

MPP5-560 DECONSTRUCTION UNDERMINES THE AUTHORITY OF "NUCLEAR EXPERTS"

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.163-4.

The question of 'competence' is crucial here, and it receives at least the outline of an answer in Derrida's text. Competence is no longer exclusively vested in those experts -- whether nuclear scientists or strategic analysts whose knowledge becomes increasingly obsolete, given the exorbitant complexity of the issues involved. There is no kind or measure of expertise that could possibly grasp these issues, or hope to come up with 'rational' solutions in the way of weapons design or deterrent strategy. In this area, Derrida writes, 'there is a multiplicity of dissociated, heterogeneous competencies. Such knowledge is neither coherent nor totalizable' (p. 22). And this means that the exercise of 'competent' reason in these matters may not, after all, be restricted to the experts, those whose knowledge embodies the powers and the limits of classical (means-end) rationality. In fact their very training in the logistics of calculated response may prevent them from seeing just how far the current situation has left such reasoning behind. It is wrong -- and extremely dangerous besides -- to suppose that the experts must have the last word since they alone grasp the full complexity of the nuclear issue. Their knowledge is based on the self-deluding premise that strategies of deterrence (or nuclear war-fighting plans) are matters of applied expertise and rational prevision. But this is to ignore the rhetorical dimension of nuclear thinking, the fact that every new weapons system, every shift in the prevailing policy of 'defence', will entail some largely unpredictable change in the way such moves are construed by the 'other side.'

MPP5-561 DECONSTRUCTION APPLIES TO NUCLEAR STRATEGY

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.164-5.

So the question of competence is not to be decided on grounds of either technical know-how or strategic expertise. Such grounds scarcely exist in this current, unnerving situation where nuclear bluff -- the exchange of unthinkable threats and counter-threats -- has reached such fantastic proportions. 'The dividing line between doxa and episteme ["mere opinion" and "knowledge"] starts to blur as soon as there is no longer any such thing as an absolutely legitimizable competence for a phenomenon which is no longer strictly techno-scientific but techno-militaro-politico-diplomatic through and through, and which brings into play the doxa or incompetence even in its calculations' (p.24). And this is where deconstruction can bring its critical strategies to bear upon the discourse of nuclear power-politics. It can point out, first, the rhetorical (or performative) status of those claims that are advanced on behalf of this or that strategic position. Such claims have no basis in fact, logic or the existing reality of armed confrontation. They are a species of elaborate fiction, but a kind that can bring about escalating sequences of bluff and double-bluff which are just as 'real', in their potential effects, as any startling new development in weaponry. 'We can therefore consider ourselves competent,' Derrida writes, 'because the sophistication of the nuclear strategy can never do without a sophistry of belief and the rhetorical simulation of a text.'

MPP5-562 NUCLEAR DETERRENCE IS A RHETORICAL PHENOMENON

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.165.

Here he is applying what amounts to a reverse lesson from Clausewitz: that war (and the strategic build-up to war) is the continuation of diplomacy by alternative means. But he is also arguing that diplomacy is and always has been a rhetorical phenomenon; that "'diplomatic power" would not exist without the structure of a text' (p. 26). And it is the nuclear issue that brings this point home with particular force by creating a plethora of discourses whose meaning and logic are entirely bound up with their power to simulate the (as yet) unthinkable event of terminal catastrophe.

MPP5-563 DECONSTRUCTION SUGGESTS THE NEED TO RETHINK NUCLEAR STRATEGY

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.168.

It is this situation that has undermined the 'competence' of those who invent nuclear strategies or who ultimately decide -- as the myth would have it -- whether war shall take place. 'All of them, that is, very few, are in the position of inventing, inaugurating, improvising procedures and giving orders where no model ... can help them at all' (p. 22). So great is the range of rhetorical gambits (promises, threats, bluffs, double-bluffs, simulated moves and counter-moves) that no reckoning-up of likely outcomes will serve to determine a rational course of action. It is on the basis of this predicament, Derrida argues one in which 'the limit itself is suspended', where 'crisis, decision, and choice are being subtracted from us' -- that we need to re-think the conditions and possibility of rational critique. This new assessment will have to take account of all those conflicting modalities of discourse that go to create such an utter confusion of strategic means and ends. It must therefore include 'the relations between knowing and acting, between constative speech-acts and performative speech-acts, between the invention that finds what was already there and the one that produces new mechanisms or new spaces' (p. 23). And it will need to work with a critical awareness of how these distinctions have taken effect, not only insofar as they have produced the very paradigms of modern 'technocratic' reason, but also in the sense that they offer the only means of enlightened resistance and critique.

MPP5-564 DECONSTRUCTION CAN BE AN EFFECTIVE TOOL OF THE PEACE MOVEMENT

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.168.

From the standpoint of current nuclear protest this attitude translates very directly into practical terms. Disarmers must do more than confront these issues with a passionate moral conviction and a rhetoric as powerful as that brought to bear by the advocates of peace through nuclear strength. They have to show that such arguments are totally misconceived; that deterrence is a notion whose 'logic', as Derrida writes, is 'either rhetorical-strategic escalation or nothing at all'. And this will involve not only a patient and detailed rebuttal of opposing claims, but also -- indispensably -- an appeal to critical reason by way of bringing out the contradictions and aporias present in the discourse of nuclear power-politics.

MPP5-565 DECONSTRUCTION THINKS THROUGH THE PARADOXES OF REASON

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.163.

But Derrida is suggesting much more than this. If deconstruction in some sense belongs to the nuclear epoch -- if it possesses, as Derrida would argue, some particular 'competence' in the matter of nuclear critique -- then this is not on account of its supposed irrationalism or its natural kinship with the sophistries of deterrence. On the contrary: deconstruction insists on thinking through those paradoxes in the nature of reason ('pure' and 'applied') whose effects are most starkly and urgently visible in nuclear-strategic debate.

MPP5-566 DECONSTRUCTION AVOIDS TECHNOCRATIC REASON

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.162.

And this is precisely where Derrida locates the sources of resistance to an otherwise ubiquitous diffusion of power/knowledge through the channels of present-day instrumental reason. It may be the case -- as he readily concedes -- that any kind of research, even in 'marginal' disciplines like literary theory, is liable to find itself somehow coopted to the purpose of extending or refining that system. But insofar as it has to make constant allowance for such wholly unpredictable benefits, the system suspends any power of deciding in advance what shall count as useful (strategically exploitable) research. And this margin of undecidability is where deconstruction finds a hold for exhibiting the aporias and the swerves from 'rational' aim that characterize modern technocratic reason.

MPP5-567 DECONSTRUCTION UNDERMINES FOUCAULT'S POSITION

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.213-14.

My arguments there had to do with the issues of truth, knowledge and representation bequeathed to modern philosophy in the wake of Kant's 'Copernican revolution'. But there is also the question -- more urgent, perhaps -- as to what might be the ethical bearings of deconstruction if its claims were taken up into our thinking about law, morality and social practice. We can perhaps best approach this question through a reading of Derrida's 'Cogito and the History of Madness', a critique of Michel Foucault's influential book *Madness and Civilization*. His object here is to demonstrate the strict impossibility, in textual or logico-discursive terms, of Foucault's having actually achieved what his argument sets out to achieve. That is to say, this is a classic deconstructionist reading, pointing out the blindspots (or moments of aporia) produced in the course of Foucault's exposition.

MPP5-568 ACCORDING TO DERRIDA, FOUCAULT CAN'T ESCAPE REASON

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.215-16.

Foucault would claim to be taking a stand against reason in its legislative aspect; revealing the Cartesian moment of 'insanity' as a covert policing operation, a prelude to internment, always safely under control by the agencies of rational thought. On the contrary, says Derrida: Foucault has performed 'a Cartesian gesture for the twentieth century', one that is all the more deceptive for flatly denying (unlike Descartes) the fact of its investment in the discourse of reason. For Foucault is undeniably making sense of this history, casting it in a perfectly intelligible narrative form and drawing argued conclusions on the basis of well-documented evidence. He is thus -- for all his gestures of a contrary intent -- finding room for the Cartesian discourse on madness within a thoroughly rational framework of discursive procedures. Only by picking out isolated episodes, like Descartes' moment of hyperbolic doubt, and by ignoring their place in his own strategy of argument, can Foucault pretend to be speaking in the name of madness or unreason.

MPP5-569 FOR DERRIDA, FOUCAULT ACTS IN BAD FAITH IN REPUDIATING REASON

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.214 .

But here is more at stake here than a mischievous desire to go one better in the drive to dismantle received ideas of knowledge and truth. Indeed, it is Derrida's contention that this project -- as Foucault conceives it involves contradictions that amount virtually to a form of intellectual bad faith. In this respect his essay looks forward to those later writings (like 'The Principle of Reason') where Derrida stresses the need to keep faith with a certain post-Kantian tradition of 'enlightened' critique. It is therefore an important text for understanding the ethical implications of Derrida's thought.

MPP5-570 "MERE" DECONSTRUCTION CAN BE HIGHLY USEFUL

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS, 1991, p.6.

Is that all that both traditions are good for? Are all these eminent thinkers Simply showing us the way out of a dusty fly-bottle, out of a dilapidated house of Being? I am strongly tempted to say, "Sure. What more did you think you were going to get out of contemporary philosophy?" But this may sound reductive. So it would be, if I were denying that the works of these people are indefinitely recontextualizable, and so may turn out to be useful in an endless variety of presently unforeseen contexts. But it is not reductive to say: do not underestimate the effects of batting around inside that particular fly-bottle. Do not underestimate what might happen to us, what we might become, as a result of getting out of it. Do not underestimate the utility of merely therapeutic, merely "deconstructive" writing.

MPP5-571 DERRIDA SHOULDN'T BE SEEN AS A FRIVOLOUS ICONOCLAST

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.132-3.

Unfortunately, many philosophers, especially in the English-speaking world, are still trying to hold on to the Platonic insistence that the principal duty of human beings is to know. That insistence was the lifeline to which Kant and Hegel thought we had to cling. Just as German philosophers in the period between Kant and Hegel saw themselves as saving "reason" from Hume, many English-speaking philosophers now see themselves saving reason from Derrida. But with the wisdom of hindsight, and with Baier's help, we have learned to read Hume not as a dangerously frivolous iconoclast but as the wettest, most flexible, least phallogocentric thinker of the Enlightenment. Someday, I suspect, our descendants may wish that Derrida's contemporaries had been able to read him not as a frivolous iconoclast, but rather as a sentimental educator, another of "the women's moral philosophers."

MPP5-572 DECONSTRUCTION IS NECESSARY TO REVEAL THE BLIND SPOTS OF DISCOURSE

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.58.

Derrida's point (and what distinguishes, in his words, a deconstructive reading from a straightforward 'critique in the Enlightenment style') is that Levinas's texts themselves provide all the evidence of his being too perceptive, too intelligent and good-willed a thinker to fall into the more facile varieties of postmodern counter-enlightenment talk. It is the same generous and principled acknowledgment that Derrida makes when he reads the texts of Plato, Rousseau, Husserl, and Levi-Strauss as revealing a complexity of motive and intent beyond anything that would register on a direct appeal to what the author manifestly had in mind. Nor is this merely a 'principle of charity' -- or an optimizing strategy of thought -- that tries to make the best of otherwise recalcitrant material. For it is Derrida's contention (and the most profound wager in all his work) that to reflect upon these questions with sufficient understanding of their historical, ethical, and philosophic pertinence is necessarily to reveal the blind-spots of a discourse -- whether that of philosophy or anti-philosophy, enlightenment or counter-enlightenment -- which seeks to exclude some feared or rejected other.

MPP5-573 DECONSTRUCTION IS ESPECIALLY APPLICABLE TO AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.199.

This difference may help to explain why deconstruction has had so much more impact in America, upon disciples and hostile commentators alike. The possession of a written Constitution whose principles are yet open to all manner of far-reaching judicial review -- for instance, on the issues of racial equality, civil rights, abortion etc. -- gives a political edge to questions of textual and interpretative theory that they do not have in the British cultural context.

MPP5-574 DERRIDA'S THOUGHT HAS AN ETHICAL DIMENSION

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.228.

I have suggested -- and it is time to make good the claim that there is an ethical dimension to Derrida's writings which has yet to be grasped by most of his commentators. On the one hand he takes it as axiomatic that philosophy in the Western tradition has for so long been preoccupied with problems of knowledge, truth and reason (essentially epistemological problems) that there is no way of actively engaging that tradition except by continuing to think them through. In Kant, as we have seen, the two kinds of discourse -- 'pure' and 'practical' reason -- are involved in a constant reciprocal exchange, subject to the laws of enlightened reason. But this debate, though vital to the interests of philosophy, still has to exclude certain other voices, those that hail from outside the whole tradition of epistemological thinking, from Plato to Husserl. For Derrida, it is chiefly in Jewish writings -- among them, those of Emmanuel Levinas -- that this summons speaks most clearly. There are many indications in his own work of Derrida's identifying closely with the heritage of Jewish thought, in particular the practice of extensive and multiplied commentary on the sacred texts of Jewish religion.

MPP5-575 DECONSTRUCTION ISN'T POLITICALLY PASSIVE

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.216.

Foucault took this critique as occasion for a contemptuous dismissal of Derrida's entire project. He attacked deconstruction as a mere rhetorical bag of tricks, a neat little 'pedagogy' secure in its knowledge that nothing exists outside the text. And his argument would seem to have persuaded others -- notably Edward Said -- that there is ultimately a choice to be made between these two divergent paths of post-structuralist thought. On the one hand is a strategy (Foucault's) which requires an active engagement with the politics of knowledge, refusing to draw any line between texts and the various legitimizing discourses of power, truth and representation. On the other is a mode of rhetorical close-reading (Derrida's) which rules out such interests from the start by declaring them a species of naive referential delusion. But this is to ignore the whole thrust of Derrida's repeated demands that we try to think beyond such disabling assumptions as that which would treat 'the world' and 'the text' in binary, disjunctive terms. What is really at issue in his quarrel with Foucault is not deconstruction's retreat into a realm of euphoric textual freeplay where political realities no longer obtrude. We have seen how Derrida's readings of Nietzsche and Freud effectively rebut this charge by insisting on the 'worldly' consequences and effects that follow from the act of writing.

MPP5-576 DECONSTRUCTION DOESN'T UNDERMINE POLITICAL ACTIVISM

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.107.

I have cited this passage once again for the light it sheds on Derrida's understanding of Mandela as a truly exemplary figure, an embodiment of 'free practical reason' in its role of resisting the false legality of a corrupt and oppressive socio-political order. For in his case also - as with those who stood out against the Nazi perversion of justice and morality -- there was (in Kristeva's words) 'a symbolic value that went against the desire to dominate and possess others under the aegis of a national, racial, or ideological membership that was considered superior'. The most crucial point here is that there is no contradiction between, on the one hand, acknowledging the fact of historical contingency -- that we are born into situations not of our choosing -- and on the other the principle that we should seek so far as possible to criticize and transform those conditions where they fall manifestly short of what is required of a just and equitable society.

MPP5-577 DERRIDA DOESN'T AVOID REAL WORLD ISSUES

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.106.

One might recall, in this connection, Derrida's essay in tribute to Nelson Mandela. His argument concerns Mandela's profession (or his ethical vocation) as a lawyer, one who moreover -- before and during his imprisonment exemplified the claims of a moral law transcending the perversions of legality and justice that characterized the South African state. Elsewhere, in a piece entitled 'Apartheid's Last Word', Derrida drew some strong criticism by appearing to treat that term as yet another item for rhetorical deconstruction, for ingenious dismantling in order to display its inbuilt 'aporias' or lack of determinate sense. But if one reads these essays together -- as I think they ought to be read -- then it quickly becomes clear how wide of the mark is any critique of deconstruction that views it as merely a 'textualist' gambit for avoiding issues of real world moral and political responsibility. What Derrida most admires (in 'Admiration: pour Nelson Mandela') is precisely the courage and intelligence displayed by one whose subjection to the rigours of an unjust and brutal state system prevented him neither from exerting his claims as an autonomous moral agent nor from condemning that system in the name of a higher, more enlightened tribunal.

MPP5-578 A DERRIDA BELIEVES THAT OUR PRESENT VALUES ARE WHAT IS NIHILISTIC

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM, 1992, p.204.

It is worth noting that here, too, Derrida shares a diagnosis of the historical present with Nietzsche and Heidegger. In full accordance with Nietzsche's understanding of "European Nihilism," he believes that it is not so much the critique of Western values (idealism, metaphysics, religion) that leads to nihilism or the precipice of meaninglessness, rather it is those values themselves that are already nihilistic and that have driven us headlong toward the abyss.

MPP5-579 DERRIDA ISN'T A POSTMODERN IRRATIONALIST

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.169-70.

Of course it would be absurd to suggest any simple equivalence of method or aim between Habermas's project of rational reconstruction and Derrida's ceaseless problematization of the principle of reason. Nevertheless I would argue that we err more grievously by assimilating Derrida to a strain of post-modern irrationalism whose effects he has done nothing to endorse. Certainly it has been a main object of Derrida's texts to show how philosophers, from Plato to Husserl, have striven and failed to suppress the signs of rhetorical disruption in the discourse of philosophic reason. But he has also been careful to repudiate that facile misreading of deconstruction -- prevalent among literary critics -- which thinks to turn the tables on philosophy by proclaiming that 'all concepts are metaphors', or that philosophic truth-claims are really metaphorical through and through.

MPP5-580 DERRIDA ISN'T AN IRRATIONALIST

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.169.

My reading of Derrida is of course sharply at odds with that prevalent idea of deconstruction as a species of last-ditch irrationalism which denies both the principle of reason and the existence of any reality 'outside' the text. I have argued that this is a gross misunderstanding of Derrida's project-, that the issues he raises belong within the tradition of Kantian enlightened critique, even while pressing that tradition to the limits (and beyond) of its own self-legitimizing claims. Indeed I would go further and suggest that his thinking in these recent texts shows distinct signs of convergence with the project of a critical theorist like Habermas. That is to say, it seeks new grounds for the exercise of enlightened critique through an idea of communicative competence which allows for specific distortions in present day discourse, but which also holds out the possibility of grasping and transcending these irrational blocks.

MPP5-581 DERRIDA ISN'T AN IRRATIONALIST

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.159.

But this raises the obvious problem: how can deconstruction claim any warrant to criticize existing structures of power/knowledge if it operates, of necessity, within that same space of deeply compromised academic discourse? One possible response is to take Lyotard's line: to announce that we have entered a 'post-modern' era where the old forms of legitimizing reason no longer exert any genuine critical force. But this leads on to a consensus-view of truth which tends, as we have seen, to endorse the political-discursive status quo and preempt any form of rational critique. Derrida firmly rejects this way of thinking (and along with it, implicitly, much of what passes for 'deconstruction' among American literary intellectuals). Those who adopt a critical stance on these questions 'need not set themselves up in opposition to the principle of reason, nor need they give way to "irrationalism"'. Continuing to work within the university, they can still properly assume, 'along with its memory and tradition, the imperatives of professional rigor and competence' (p. 17). And this by reason of the need for any 'competent' critique to think through its own position with a scrupulous regard to those concepts of scope and method which define the limits of a 'discipline', a faculty or field of enquiry.

MPP5-582 DECONSTRUCTION IS A RIGOROUS FORM OF RATIONAL CRITIQUE

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.162.

I have argued (and understood Derrida as arguing) that deconstruction is a rigorous attempt to think the limits of that principle of reason which has shaped the emergence of Western philosophy, science and technology at large. It is rigorous insofar as it acknowledges the need to engage with that principle in all its effects and discursive manifestations. Thus the activity of deconstruction is strictly inconceivable outside the tradition of enlightened rational critique whose classic formulations are still to found in Kant.

MPP5-583 DERRIDA DOESN'T REJECT THE ENLIGHTENMENT TRADITION

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.216-17.

And this would certainly apply in the context of his argument with Foucault, where the stake on both sides is a set of institutionalized relations between power, knowledge and the discourse of reason. Foucault's extreme epistemological scepticism leads him to equate knowledge with power, and hence to regard all forms of 'enlightened' progress (in psychiatry, sexual attitudes or penal reform) as signs of an increasing sophistication in the applied technology of social control. Derrida, by contrast, insists that there is no opting out of that post-Kantian enlightenment tradition, and certainly no question of our now having emerged into a post-modern era where its concepts and categories lack all critical force. On the contrary: it is only by working persistently within that tradition, but against some of its ruling ideas, that thought can muster the resistance required for an effective critique of existing institutions.

MPP5-584 DERRIDA APPEALS TO KANTIAN STANDARDS

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.107.

I have perhaps said enough to indicate how closely this corresponds to the values and principles invoked by Derrida in his essay on Mandela. In each case there is a twofold ground of appeal: to the individual conscience as arbiter of right and wrong, and, beyond that, to the wider community of judgment -- the Kantian *sensus communis* -- wherein such questions can intelligibly be raised despite and against the localized pressures of conformist (state-sponsored or naturalized) belief.

MPP5-585 DERRIDA DOESN'T DENY REALITY

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.142.

There is no excuse for the sloppy misreading of Derrida that represents him as some kind of transcendental solipsist who believes that nothing real exists outside the written text. It is a notion he has often been at pains to rebut, most explicitly in a passage from *Positions* (1972) where Derrida responds to a series of questions on precisely this topic.

MPP5-586 DERRIDA DOESN'T CLAIM THERE'S NOTHING OUTSIDE LANGUAGE

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.144.

Thus one finds Derrida in a more recent interview (1981) deploring the widespread misunderstanding that reads in his work 'a declaration that there is nothing beyond language, that we are imprisoned in language ... and other stupidities of that sort'.

MPP5-587 DERRIDA DOESN'T REJECT HUMANISM

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.219-20.

To be sure, Derrida has done much to encourage this view of deconstruction as collaborating cheerfully in the overthrow of 'man' and all his works. But he also sees problems -- very real and far-reaching problems -- with any claim that thought has at last come out on the far side of a humanist (or anthropocentric) ideology. In 'The Ends of Man' (Margins of Philosophy) Derrida examines a series of pronouncements, from Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre and others, which take it for granted at least that the question may be raised -- intelligibly raised -- as to whether such an 'end' is in sight. On the contrary, he argues: such pronouncements are always marked by a failure to interrogate their own root assumptions, their involvement with a language everywhere coloured by humanist themes and motifs. One cannot simply 'decide to change terrain, in a discontinuous and irruptive fashion, by brutally placing oneself outside, and by affirming an absolute break and difference' (Margins, p. 135). Such premature assertions of the 'end of man' will always be affected by the same kind of unperceived paradox or aporia as overtakes Foucault's discourse on madness and reason. That is to say, they ignore the simple fact that no case can be argued, no proposition stated -- however radical its intent -- without failing back on the conceptual resources vested in natural language. And that language is in turn shot through with all the anthropocentric, 'metaphysical' meanings which determine its very logic and intelligibility. Any claim to have broken once and for all with the humanist 'sciences of man' is a claim which can only be self-deluding and devoid of critical power. 'The simple practice of language ceaselessly reinstates the new terrain on the oldest ground ... thereby inhabiting more naively and more strictly than ever the inside one declares one has deserted' (p. 135).

MPP5-588 DERRIDA REJECTS THE EXAGGERATION OF DIFFERENCE

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.49.

In fact -- as Derrida notes in his essay on Levinas -- there is a risk that such thinking will reproduce the most traditional of philosophic gestures. That is to say, it treats the other (like Foucault's 'madness') as a discourse of absolute alterity which for that very reason - by virtue of its intransigent otherness - becomes more an object of philosophic scrutiny than an instance of subjectively intelligible language. And so it transpires, through this most ironic of reversals, that the attempt to do justice to the other by acknowledging his or her unconditional difference produces what amounts to a gesture of containment, a move whereby that other is envisaged as the mute, non-signifying matter of philosophic discourse.

MPP5-589 DERRIDA PRESERVES THE IDEA OF INTERSUBJECTIVE UNDERSTANDING

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.57-8

Thus when Derrida reads Levinas he does so on the one hand with a view to the latter's situation as a Jewish philosopher writing out of a knowledge and experience of the Holocaust, and on the other -- as always in his finest work -- with a strict regard to philosophic protocols of logic, consistency, and truth. Moreover, in so far as he criticizes Levinas, it is because the latter's idea of ethics as a discourse of radical alterity would in effect close off the very prospect of any such intersubjective appeal to the other's knowledge and experience. Thus: '(t)he other as alter ego signifies the other as other, irreducible to my ego, precisely because it is an ego, because it has the form of an ego. The egoity of the other permits him to say "ego" as I do; and this is why he is Other, and not a stone, or a being without speech 'in my real economy' (Derrida's emphases).

MPP5-590 DERRIDA ACCEPTS THAT A SHARED UNDERSTANDING IS ESSENTIAL FOR ETHICS

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.48.

'It is impossible', Derrida writes, 'to encounter the alter ego (in the very form of the encounter described by Levinas), impossible to respect it in experience and in language, if this other, in its alterity, does not appear for an ego (in general).' And again: '(o)ne could neither speak, nor have any sense of the totally other, if there was not a phenomenon of the totally other, or evidence of the totally other as such.' From which it follows that we must have knowledge of the other -- understand him or her by analogy with our own experience if 'otherness' is not to become just a form of inverted autism, an empty locus upon which to project our ideas of a radical (hence wholly abstract and unknowable) difference. Thus for Derrida as also for Habermas, Davidson, and Putnam -- despite their otherwise very disparate lines of approach -- there is a level of shared understanding prerequisite to any ethics (or any theory of mutual obligation) that would seek to avoid this ultimate impasse. Nor is it the case that the turn towards language (or discourse) as a basis for treating these issues necessarily leads to some version of the postmodern incommensurability-thesis. For it can just as well be taken as yet further evidence that the thesis reduces to manifest nonsense if carried to the point where understanding is dissolved in a rhetoric of 'otherness' devoid of intelligible content.

MPP5-591 DECONSTRUCTION DOESN'T LICENSE AN INTERPRETIVE FREE-FOR-ALL

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.205.

As with Nietzsche, so with a text like Rousseau's Social Contract, or indeed a document of epochal significance like the American Declaration of Independence. There is always the possibility of some radical new reading that would utterly change -- for better or worse -- the way that such writings impinge upon our social and political practices. But this is not to license a relativist euphoria, a free-for-all approach that would brook no constraints upon the 'freeplay' of interpretative discourse. For it is still possible to perceive and deconstruct the various forms of angled misreading which make up this history of Ideological claims-to-power.

MPP5-592 DECONSTRUCTION IS UNPERSUASIVE--IT JUST INVERTS ALL ACCEPTED VIEWS

John Ellis, Professor of German, University of California-Santa Cruz, AGAINST DECONSTRUCTION, 1989, p.81

Paradoxically, it would seem that deconstruction is a victim of the restrictive binary logic that it likes to denigrate: it thinks in terms of subverting and undermining traditional views, but that excludes the really progressive possibility of just departing from those views, their emphases, and their terms. It is surely that kind of departure that provides real progress.

MPP5-593 DECONSTRUCTION IS INTELLECTUAL ANARCHISM

J.G. Merquior, King's College, London, FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS, 1986, p.236

Deconstruction, on the other hand, seems content to undo meaning instead of trying to make knowledge. Its theory of the text is not only anti-empiricist but downright anti-empirical. At heart, it relishes the starkest intellectual anarchism. Feyerabend abolished only the hierarchy of contending scientific theories. Derrida goes far beyond this: he wants to suppress order among meanings, not just among theories. Feyerabend and his like, the anarchists of epistemology, remain logocentric squares: anarchy must free signification, not just knowledge.

MPP5-594 DECONSTRUCTION IS BASED ON INTELLECTUAL FAKERY

John Searle, Professor of Philosophy, University of California-Berkeley, WORKING THROUGH DERRIDA, 1993, p.188

There is deconstructive writing. What becomes even more surprising is that the authors seem to think it is all right to engage in these practices, because they hold a theory to the effect that pretensions to objective truth and rationality in science, philosophy, and common sense can be deconstructed as logocentric subterfuges. To put it crudely, they think that since everything is phony anyway, the phoniness of deconstruction is somehow acceptable, indeed commendable, since it lies right on the surface ready for further deconstruction. Thus, the general weaknesses of the deconstructive enterprise become self-justifying. With such an approach I am indeed not sympathetic.

MPP5-595 DERRIDA'S STYLE RELIES ON TERRORISTIC OBSCURITY

John Searle, Professor of Philosophy, University of California-Berkeley, WORKING THROUGH DERRIDA, 1993, p.178-9

Michel Foucault once characterized Derrida's prose style to me as "obscurantisme terroriste." The text is written so obscurely that you can't figure out exactly what the thesis is (hence "obscurantisme") and then when one criticizes it, the author says, "Vous m'avez mal compris; vous etes idiot" (hence "terroriste").

MPP5-596 DERRIDA'S STYLE RENDERS HIS THOUGHT INCOHERENT

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY, 1995, p.192.

An indefatigable writer and lecturer with an enormous following, Derrida has made paradox, contradiction, linguistic juggling, and inchoate thinking into virtues. Many of his verbal gymnastics derive from Heidegger, although he cannot be denied the responsibility for generating considerable confusion in his own right. To enter into the Derridean skein of criss-crossing ideas, assertions, inscriptions, and convoluted 'horizons', 'spaces', and self-indulgent queries that, in my view, muddle rather than clarify a viewpoint is beyond the scope of this book. Indeed, more than one book would be needed to give Derrida his due and I do not mean this in any complimentary sense.

MPP5-597 DECONSTRUCTION SUBSTITUTES INCOHERENCE FOR CRITIQUE

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY, 1995, p.196.

Deconstruction is thus a formula -- and practice -- for incoherence in the name of in-depth critique. Immanent critique, to be sure, is eminently desirable, as long as it is not arbitrary. But by virtue of its anti-'logocentrism', deconstruction can mean almost anything. In current usage it can range from the most flippant criticisms to almost incomprehensible 'metaphysical' analyses. In 1968, Derrida himself described it in apocalyptic terms, when apocalypses were highly fashionable, after which its meaning seems to have aged with time from a 'radical trembling' to a fatalistic recognition that Western rationalism is so completely with us, even in 'traces', that 'breaks are always, and fatally, reinscribed in an old cloth that must continually, interminably be undone'. By privileging the written 'text' over speech, deconstruction removes the reader from the author of a work and places him or her completely in the hands of the interpreter -- or at the mercy of Harold Fromm's 'invisible puppeteer'.

MPP5-598 DECONSTRUCTION RENDERES ITS TEXTS POINTLESS

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY, 1995, p.196-7.

In fact, deconstruction so depersonalizes the 'text' that it safely removes the reader from heated issues that are often raised in a literary work. Freed of that existential content, these deracinated writings can be coolly manipulated into any configuration one chooses like checker pieces on a blank board. Arthur C. Danto observes: To treat philosophical texts after the manner of Derrida, simply as networks of reciprocal relationships, is precisely to put them at a distance from its readers so intraversable as to make it impossible that they be about its in the way literature requires. They become simply artifacts made of words, with no references save internal ones or incidental external ones. And reading them becomes external, as though they had nothing to do with us, were merely there, intricately wrought composites of logical lacework, puzzling and pretty and pointless. Danto, if anything, is too kind to the Derrideans and deconstructionists.

MPP5-599 FOR FOUCAULT AND SAID, DERRIDA MUDDLES THOUGHT BEYOND USEFULNESS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, LABYRINTHS, 1995, p.232.

Nor is Foucault the only critic to have challenged Derrida in this way Edward Said contends that Derrida's highly formalized obsession with the abstruse terms of "archewriting" -- that is, with avowed "non-concepts" such as the trace, grammatology, supplement, differance, dissemination, and so forth--ends up by "muddling ... thought beyond the possibility of usefulness." Said continues: "The effect of [deconstructionist] logic (the *mise en abyme*) is to reduce everything that we think of as having some extratextual leverage in the text to a textual function...Derrida's key words . . . are unregenerate signs: he says that they cannot be made more significant than signifiers are. In some quite urgent way, then, there is something frivolous about them, as all words that cannot be accommodated to a philosophy of serious need or utility are futile or unserious."

MPP5-600 DECONSTRUCTION CAN'T PLAUSIBLY BE SAID TO BE MISUNDERSTOOD

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, LABYRINTHS, 1995, p.232.

Needless to say, Derrida has not taken well to such criticisms. He believes that, apart from a loyal coterie of initiates, the political implications of his work have been seriously misunderstood. Here, however, one might inquire as to how one could, from a strictly deconstructionist standpoint, actually distinguish instances of misunderstanding from understanding in general. After all, when a theory is predicated on the maxims of dissemination, translation, and "iterability," on the claim that "all understanding is merely a species of misunderstanding," one would like to know on what basis the founder of deconstruction can plausibly claim to have been "misunderstood." In an era in which the claims to authorship as well as other so-called transcendental signifieds and signifiers have been so thoroughly deconstructed, and in which the Derridean maxim about understanding as a species of misunderstanding has become a commonplace, how exactly can an author rightfully claim to be misinterpreted?

MPP5-601 DECONSTRUCTION EMBRACES THE BRAVE NEW WORLD

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, LABYRINTHS, 1995, p.239.

Following the lead of Debord and Baudrillard, there is a certain plausibility in trying to understand deconstruction as a form of theory appropriate to a neo-Orwellian age of semio-technics: an era in which a surfeit of signification simply overwhelms the subject, leaving in its wake a substratum that is hetero-nomously fabricated rather than, as with the old liberal ideal, autonomous and self-positing. But this would mean the realization of a brave new world in which no contestation or oppositional praxis could take place, the potential addressees of the theory having been long cyberneticized out of existence.

MPP5-602 DECONSTRUCTION IS SIMPLY A NEGATIVE DOGMATISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM, 1992, p.213

And thus, despite Derrida's many well-placed reservations about the tradition of Western rationalism, one must be wary about falling into a reverse dogmatism: a dogmatism of the negative. It is undoubtedly in this vein that Edward Said has suggested that "the supreme irony of what Derrida has called logocentrism is that its critique, deconstruction, is as insistent, as monotonous and as inadvertently systematizing as logocentrism itself"; in the predictability of its results, it risks becoming merely the inverse image of what it criticizes: the dogmatism of "undecidability."

MPP5-603 WE NEED RECONSTRUCTION, NOT DECONSTRUCTION

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.209-10.

Be that as it may, I think that if we accord a certain heuristic value to MacIntyre's fable of contemporary moral decay, it poses significant problems for a framework such as Derrida's. Bluntly put: it may well be that the current historical hour requires a labor of reconstruction rather than deconstruction. Of course, Derrida has always insisted that deconstruction, far from being a purely negative or nihilistic endeavor, in no way rules out the realization of "positive" results, whose attainment would be implicit in the practice of "remarking." But, in truth, the affinities between deconstruction and the contemporary spirit of "unmaking" are so profound that it becomes extremely difficult, if not at times impossible, to imagine concretely the type of "positivities" deconstruction would freely embrace.

MPP5-604 DECONSTRUCTION BECOMES UNRESTRAINED FREE ASSOCIATION

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.197.

Often deconstructionists subject the reader to a barrage of elusive questions, so characteristic of Derrida's own 'texts', that they turn from hortatory queries into unrestrained free association.

MPP5-605 DERRIDA LACKS A CLEAR POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.12.

Jacques Derrida, for instance, though sharing some of these thinkers' epistemological and metaphysical commitments, remains without a clearly articulated political philosophy. Derrida has, of course, both written on and participated in political affairs. He has not, however, articulated -- and would probably resist doing so -- a more comprehensive political perspective.

MPP5-606 DERRIDA'S POLITICS ARE VAGUE AND ABSTRACT

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *LABYRINTHS*, 1995, p.233.

From his very first texts, Derrida has always emphasized the positional or contextual nature of deconstruction. His recent preoccupation with Marx is no exception. Undeniably, since the mid-1980s Derrida has sought to reposition his thought in order to counter the charges of ethical indifference and apoliticism, the suspicion that deconstruction is interested in little more than the arbitrary "free play of signification." Nevertheless, many of these efforts have failed to go beyond a few rather abstract and perfunctory invocations of "responsibility" and "openness toward the other" as in the remarks just cited. In lieu of a more concrete specification of the meaning of otherness and openness, of which "others" we should open ourselves toward, of how precisely we should open ourselves to the other and why, and of the ways we might translate the ethical maxim of openness into forms of practical life conduct or everyday institutional settings, we are left with a directive that in its generality and imprecision seems more frustrating than illuminating.

MPP5-607 SAID DENIES DECONSTRUCTION'S POLITICAL USEFULNESS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.200.

In a similar vein, Edward Said wonders aloud whether Derrida's approach to criticism, by virtue of its emphasis on fissures, absences, and the impossibility of determining meaning with any semblance of certainty, does not "[muddle] traditional thought beyond the possibility of its usefulness." "The effect of such [deconstructionist] logic (the *mise en abyme*)," he continues, "is to reduce everything that we think of as having some extratextual leverage in the text to a textual function." He concludes unsparingly: "Derrida's key words [hymen, difference, trace, supplement, etc.] ... are unregenerate signs: he says that they cannot be made more significant than signifiers are. In some quite urgent way, then, there is something frivolous about them, as all words that cannot be accommodated to a philosophy of serious need or utility are futile or unserious." (However harsh such remarks may seem, they may, ironically, be in perfect accord with Derrida's own self-understanding, which is centered around the notion of signification as "play").

MPP5-608 DERRIDA LACKS AN EXPLICIT POLITICS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.7.

Furthermore, the fact that Lyotard, Rorty, and Foucault are explicit about their political commitments makes them natural candidates for my project in a way that other exponents of the postmodern position, such as Derrida, are not.

MPP5-609 DERRIDA'S LINGUISTIC EMPHASIS DESTROYS PRACTICAL POLITICS

Mark Lillia, Professor of Politics, New York University, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, June 25, 1998, p.40.

Derrida is some vague sort of left democrat who values "difference" and, as his recent short pamphlet on cosmopolitanism shows, he is committed to seeing Europe become a more open, hospitable place, not least for immigrants. These are not remarkable ideas, nor are they contemptible. But like so many among the structuralist generation, Derrida is convinced that the only way to extend the democratic values he himself holds is to destroy the language in which the West has always conceived of them, in the mistaken belief that it is language, not reality, that keeps our democracies imperfect. Only by erasing the vocabulary of Western political thought can we hope for a "repoliticization" or a "new concept of politics." But once that point is achieved, what we discover is that the democracy we want cannot be described or defended; it, can only be treated as an article of irrational faith, a messianic dream.

MPP5-610 BELIEF IN DERRIDA'S POLITICS IS UTTERLY NAIVE

Mark Lillia, Professor of Politics, New York University, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, June 25, 1998, p.41.

No wonder a tour through the post modernist section of any American bookshop is such a disconcerting experience. The most illiberal, anti-enlightenment notions are put forward with a smile and the assurance that, followed out to their logical conclusion, they could only lead us into the democratic promised land, where all God's children will join hands in singing the national anthem. It is an uplifting vision and Americans believe in uplift. That so many of them seem to have found it in the dark and forbidding works of Jacques Derrida attests to the strength of Americans' self-confidence and their awesome capacity to think well of anyone and any idea. Not for nothing do the French still call us *les grands enfants*.

MPP5-611 DERRIDA INDISCRIMINATELY REJECTS ALL POLITICAL APPROACHES

Mark Lillia, Professor of Politics, New York University, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, June 25, 1998, p.38.

From this point of view it would seem that all Western political ideologies -- fascism, conservatism, liberalism, socialism, communism -- would be equally unacceptable. That is the logical implication of Derrida's attack on logocentrism, and sometimes he appears to accept it. In *Specters of Marx* and *The Other Heading* he denounces the new liberal consensus he sees as having ruled the West since 1989, lashing out hysterically, and unoriginally, at the "New International" of global capitalism and media conglomerates that have established world hegemony by means of an "unprecedented form of war." He is less critical of Marxism (for reasons we will examine), though he does believe that communism became totalitarian when it tried to realize the eschatological program laid out by Marx himself.

MPP5-612 DERRIDA'S APPROACH UNDERMINES POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Mark Lillia, Professor of Politics, New York University, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, June 25, 1998, p.38.

Yet how would that be possible? Derrida's radical interpretations of structuralism and Heideggerianism had rendered the traditional vocabulary of politics unusable and nothing could be put in its place. The subjects considered in traditional political philosophy -- individual human beings and nations -- were declared to be artifices of language, and dangerous ones at that. The object of political philosophy -- a distinct realm of political action -- was seen as part of a general system of relations that itself had no center. And as for the method of political philosophy -- rational inquiry toward a practical end -- Derrida had succeeded in casting suspicion on its logocentrism. An intellectually consistent deconstruction would therefore seem to entail silence on political matters. Or, if silence proved unbearable, it would at least require a serious reconsideration of the antihumanist dogmas of the structuralist and Heideggerian traditions. To his credit, Michel Foucault began such a reconsideration in the decade before his death. Jacques Derrida never has.

MPP5-613 DERRIDA IS UNABLE TO PRODUCE A CONSTRUCTIVE POLITICS

Mark Lillia, Professor of Politics, New York University, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, June 25, 1998, p.40.

Derrida's turn to them in these new political writings bears all the signs of intellectual desperation. He clearly wants deconstruction to serve some political program, and to give hope to the dispirited left. He also wants to correct the impression that his own thought, like that of Heidegger, leads inevitably to a blind "resolve," an assertion of will that could take any political form. As he remarked not long ago, "My hope as a man of the left, is that certain elements of deconstruction will have served or -- because the struggle continues, particularly in the United States -- will serve to politicize or repoliticize the left with regard to positions which are not simply academic." Yet the logic of his own philosophical arguments, such as they are, proves stronger than Derrida. He simply cannot find a way of specifying the nature of the justice to be sought through left-wing politics without opening himself to the very deconstruction he so gleefully applies to others. Unless, of course, he places the "idea of justice" in the eternal, messianic beyond where it cannot be reached by argument, and assumes that his ideologically sympathetic readers won't ask too many questions.

MPP5-614 DERRIDA'S PHILOSOPHY CAN'T PROVIDE A GUIDE TO POLITICAL ACTION

Mark Lillia, Professor of Politics, New York University, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, June 25, 1998, p.40.

But politics on the left, no less than on the right, is not a matter of passive expectation. It envisages action. And if the idea of justice cannot be articulated, it cannot provide any aim for political action. According to Derrida's argument, all that remains to guide us is decision, pure and simple: a decision for justice or democracy, and for a particular understanding of both. Derrida places enormous trust in the ideological goodwill or prejudices of his readers, for he cannot tell them why he chooses justice over injustice, or democracy over tyranny, only that he does. Nor can he offer the uncommitted any reasons for thinking that the left has a monopoly on the correct understanding of these ideas. He can only offer impressions, as in the little memoir he has published in *Moscou aller-retour*, where he confesses to still being choked with emotion whenever he hears the Internationale.

MPP5-615 DERRIDA'S NEO-HEIDEGGERIAN POLITICS IS INTELLECTUALLY IMPOVERISHED

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, LABYRINTHS, 1995, p.238-9.

I have assembled these citations at some length in order to make a point. One would have hoped that Derrida, in returning to Marx, would have broken some new ground; that, at the very least, he would have pointed to a new way of understanding Marxism that would free us of some of its more dogmatic encumbrances. Instead, what we are provided with essentially is a Heideggerianized Marx, which is far from an improvement. Like Heidegger's later doctrine of technology, of an all-encompassing logic of "enframing" or *das Gestell*, Derrida's discussion of capitalism in an age of media technics suffers from an impoverishment of action categories. In his analysis surveillance, the prosthetic image, and the simulacrum function as omnipotent unmoved movers. There is no discussion of logics of socialization, of the complex process via which norms are internalized by social actors. The ontological prejudices of philosophical antihumanism, a Heideggerian inheritance, categorically rule out such terms of social analysis. In Derrida's portrayal of information-era capitalism, there are no actors left to speak of, they have been deconstructed along with the "subject" -- thus, only ghosts and phantoms remain.

MPP5-616 DERRIDA'S POLITICS ARE OVERLY MESSIANIC

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, LABYRINTHS, 1995, p.237.

As one critic has pointed out: "in order to identify himself with a 'certain spirit of Marx' Derrida must not only strip Marxism of all its political practices and philosophical traditions but also then recoup it only in the indeterminacy of a . . . 'messianic-eschatological' mode. The later Heidegger once famously observed that so utterly forlorn and hopeless were conditions in the modern world that, 'Only a god can save us.' By relying on the idiom of messianism and negative theology to ground social critique, Derrida -- true to the Left Heideggerian legacy -- follows closely in the master's footsteps.

MPP5-617 DERRIDA DRAWS ON THE MOST BANKRUPT ELEMENTS OF MARXISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, LABYRINTHS, 1995, p.236.

But the terms in which Derrida understands contemporary society are semiapocalyptic. In fact they rely on aspects of the Marxist tradition that in many ways have proved the most problematical and the least serviceable for the purposes of radical criticism. The deficiencies of Marxist thought pertain to a metatheoretical framework that stressed: (1) a nonfalsifiable philosophy of history; (2) a neo-Hegelian (hence, metaphysical) conception of the proletariat as the "universal class"; (3) a naivete concerning the bureaucratic consequences related to the goal of socializing the means of production. Moreover, in Marx's theory one finds a debilitating conflation of the values of economic and political liberalism. In practice, he often cynically assumed that liberal principles were little more than ideological window-dressing for mechanisms of bourgeois class domination. Often, however, liberal-humanitarian impulses served as the basis for the progressive reform of inhuman levels of exploitation that existed under early capitalism. For such condition's existed in blatant contradiction to the universalistic sentiments espoused by the intellectuals and philosophers who had laid the groundwork for the transition from feudal to modern democratic society.

MPP5-618 DERRIDA OFFERS A BIZARRE APOLOGETICS FOR MARXISM

Mark Lillia, Professor of Politics, New York University, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, June 25, 1998, p.40.

This nostalgic note is struck time and again in *Specters of Marx* and *Moscou aller-retour*, which deserve permanent places in the crowded pantheon of bizarre Marxist apologetics. In the latter book Derrida declares that "deconstruction never had meaning or interest, at least in my eye's, than as a radicalization, that is to say, also within the tradition of a certain Marxism, in a certain spirit of Marxism." Not, of course, that he wishes to defend anything Marx himself actually wrote or believed. He declares Marx's economics to be rubbish and his philosophy of history a dangerous myth. But all that is beside the point. The "spirit" of Marxism gave rise to a great heritage of messianic yearning, and deserves respect for that reason. Indeed, in a certain sense, we are all Marxists now simply because Marxism, well, happened.

MPP5-619 DERRIDA IGNORES DEMOCRATIC THEORY
Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, LABYRINTHS, 1995, p.236.

As part of the attempt to compensate for the manifest normative deficits of traditional Marxism, in the last ten years a major effort has been undertaken in order to develop a critical theory of democracy. In principle such a theory would preserve Marx's original critique of the excrescences of capitalist development with a greater attention to the requirements for justice, fairness, and equity embodied in the modern democratic idea. It is worth noting that Derrida takes virtually no interest in these developments. He situates himself *au delà* or beyond contemporary debates concerning democratic theory. But this is hardly an accident. He adopts this position in part for reasons of theoretical consistency: according to the precepts of deconstruction, normative questions are, strictly speaking, "undecidable." Were deconstruction to condescend to debate in the idiom and terms of normative political theory, it would succumb to an entire train of logocentric biases and illusions that, for decades, it has been at pains to combat.

MPP5-620 DERRIDA FALSELY CONFLATES DEMOCRACY AND CAPITALISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, LABYRINTHS, 1995, p.237.

Thus, in the book on Marx, and in keeping with the tradition of Left Heideggerianism, Derrida succumbs to the temptation of reducing democracy and liberalism essentially to forms of capitalist rule. He rails against those "who find the means to puff out their chests with the good conscience of capitalism, liberalism, and the virtues of parliamentary democracy" -- as if the conceptual bases of all three phenomena were in essence the same. Historically, the normative precepts of liberalism and democracy have often entered into sharp conflict with the capitalist ethos of profit maximization -- as one has seen in the history of the labor, women's, and ecology movements. In the interstices of these various social spheres, with their conflicting normative claims, lies a potential for protest and social reform that Derrida excludes by virtue of the apocalyptic theoretical framework he adopts.

MPP5-621 DECONSTRUCTION UNDERMINES JUSTICE
Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM, 1992, p.211.

Aristotle, one will recall, in the Politics had the following to say about logos: "Logos serves to declare what is advantageous and what is the reverse, and it therefore serves to declare what is just and what is unjust. It is the peculiarity of man, in comparison with the rest of the animal world, that he alone possesses a perception of good and evil, of the just and the unjust, and of other similar qualities." In its sweeping indictment of logocentrism, by treating its occidental preeminence as little more than an incurable social pathology, doesn't deconstruction risk losing contact with an indispensable capacity for theoretical discernment: a capacity for distinguishing between "what is just and what is unjust" which, according to Aristotle, more than anything else accounts for our humanity.

MPP5-622 DERRIDA'S IDEA OF JUSTICE IS A PURELY MYSTICAL CONCEPT

Mark Lillia, Professor of Politics, New York University, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, June 25, 1998, p.39.

Now, however, he also wishes to claim that there is a concept called justice, and that it stands "outside and beyond the law." But since this justice cannot be understood through nature or reason, that only leaves one possible means of access to its meaning: revelation. Derrida studiously avoids this term but it is what he is talking about. In *Force de loi* he speaks of an "idea of justice" as "an experience of the impossible," something that exists beyond all experience and therefore cannot be articulated. And what cannot be articulated cannot be deconstructed; it can only be experienced in a mystical way.

MPP5-623 DERRIDA NEGLECTS ETHICAL CHOICE

Diane Michelfelder and Richard Palmer, MacMurray College, DIALOGUE AND DECONSTRUCTION, 1989, p.5

In Derrida, Dallmayr welcomes a more thoroughgoing critique of subjectivism. He is bothered, though, by the consequences of Derrida's emphasis on difference and undecidability: his inclination to avoid the risks of dialogue, to "circumvent and elude" interaction with other points of view, and also his indifference to ethics, his "neglect" of the dimension of human activity in which judgment and decision-making are essential.

MPP5-624 DERRIDA CAN'T JUSTIFY ANY ETHICAL POSITION

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM, 1992, p.213.

I believe that no one has addressed these questions with more subtlety and insight than Richard Bernstein: Derrida knows all too well that there is no ethics or politics -- or even metaethics or metapolitics -- without "taking a position." But few have written more persuasively and imaginatively than he has about all the snares and traps that await us in "taking a position" how easily we can fall back into the metaphysics of presence and the dream of a fixed center that he has sought so valiantly to question; how a self-deceptive violent dogmatism awaits those for whom archai do not tremble. But even if we learn this lesson over and over again, we are still left with the unanswered question: how can we "warrant" (in any sense of the term) the ethical-political "positions" we do take? This is the question that Derrida never satisfactorily answers. What is worse, despite the overwhelming evidence of his own moral passion and his willingness and courage in "taking positions," he seems to call into question the very possibility of "warranting" ethical-political positions.

MPP5-625 DERRIDA IGNORES THE REALITY OF INDIVIDUAL AUTONOMY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *LABYRINTHS*, 1995, p.239.

Here, the debilities of the analytical framework correspond to those of archewriting in general. As a philosophy of language that is predicated on the logics of dissemination and the trace, Derridean grammatology is unable to account for mutual solidarity among actors. The process whereby norms are criticized or accepted by individuals is not merely a product of "iterability," nor is it merely an epiphenomenal blip set against the omnipotent backdrop of Derridean negative semiotics. It is rather the outcome of an intricate interweaving of ontogenesis and socialization. It is a process whereby persons become "social selves" via the internalization of societal roles, values, and norms. Yet, such mechanisms of social integration are always contingent on a moment of individual autonomy: on the capacity of social actors to assent to or to reject communally transmitted norms. Only a theory of socialization that is able to account for this capacity for refusal, for a moment of autonomous individuation, can simultaneously explain the capacity of social actors to resist inherited constellations of power. For want of such perspectives, Derrida's negative hermeneutics of reading threatens to become merely a literary critical version of systems theory: trace, supplement, and difference become the prime movers; the convictions of social actors are merely their effects, something merely inscribed by the endlessly churning, infernal machine of Derridean archewriting.

MPP5-626 DECONSTRUCTION IS INTELLECTUALLY CONFORMIST, NOT INNOVATIVE

John Ellis, Professor of German, University of California-Santa Cruz, *AGAINST DECONSTRUCTION*, 1989, p.89

The temper of deconstructionist criticism is, in fact, remarkable for its conformism, rather than the reverse; deconstructive writings tend to go over the same ground and use the same vocabulary (logocentrism, difference, demystifying, etc.) without substantial modification or fresh analysis on each occasion. These are not the signs of a genuinely open, intellectually probing new movement.

MPP5-627 DECONSTRUCTION IS POLITICALLY INEFFECTUAL AND REACTIONARY

Paul Gross and Norman Levitt, University of Virginia Professor of Life Sciences and Rutgers University Professor of Mathematics, *HIGHER SUPERSTITION*, 1994, p.83

Even those among leftist intellectuals who have in part accepted the stance or methodology characteristic of postmodernism are left with a degree of unease. Alexander J. Argyros, in the statement of purpose that begins his book, flatly asserts: "Since it is essentially a negative methodology, when deconstruction is called upon to address concrete issues, such as political ones, its penchant for eliding commitment and its resistance to postulating scales of value render it ineffectual at best and reactionary at worst."

MPP5-628 DERRIDA'S PHILOSOPHY IS MERELY A RHETORICAL RESTATEMENT OF HEIDEGGER

J.G. Merquior, King's College, London, *FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS*, 1986, p.218

Trained philosophers such as Searle usually protest when they read literary critics like Culler who, in their enthusiasm over Derrida, overlook the importance to him of Husserl or Heidegger. Few realize--as did Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut--that Derrida's originality is at bottom merely rhetorical, an enterprise of relentless symbolization of Heidegger's theme of the 'ontological difference'.

MPP5-629 HEIDEGGER'S NAZISM ALSO IMPUGNS DERRIDA

Paul Gross and Norman Levitt, University of Virginia Professor of Life Sciences and Rutgers University Professor of Mathematics, *HIGHER SUPERSTITION*, 1994, p.76-7

At about the same time, new facts came to light concerning the enthusiasms of the influential philosopher Martin Heidegger for Nazi doctrine, enthusiasms that now appear to have been heartfelt, and that let Heidegger, as rector of his university during the thirties, to perpetrate unforgivable acts of repression. Since Derrida had always claimed derivation of his thought from Heidegger, his own credibility as a liberatory thinker came under challenge.

MPP5-630 DECONSTRUCTION ULTIMATELY PROPS UP CAPITALISM

Daniel Singer, *MONTHLY REVIEW*, November 1997, p.4.

In revealing the tremendous racial, gender -- less often class -- bias hidden beneath the great declarations of principles of our pundits and preachers, the deconstructionists are attacking and undermining the system. But, at the same time, as post-modernists, they are coming to its rescue, condemning not only grand narratives but the very idea of a coherent, systematic alternative to capitalism. And the rescue is thus much more important than the attack because the capitalist system can put up with all sorts of uncoordinated, sporadic assaults. The only thing it has really to fear is a coherent, frontal offensive.

MPP5-631 DECONSTRUCTION IS ULTIMATELY CONSERVATIVE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.200-1.

In *Tropics of Discourse*, Hayden White sets forth a number of similar criticisms, which culminate in the charge that Derrida is "imprisoned in structuralism's hypostatized labyrinth of language." Finally, for Russell Berman, the political implications of deconstruction -- pseudo-radical rhetorical posturing notwithstanding -- are deeply conservative: "It marks the termination of the radicalism of the sixties: preserving the radicalism as tropic gesture but bringing it to an end as social practice." Viewed sociologically, deconstruction represents a "reification of radicalism" that is profoundly consonant with the era of neoconservative political stabilization and apathy: For it is, after all, "always already" only verbal radicalism; hence the rallying cry that there is nothing beyond the text. Far from trying to change the world, deconstruction does not even want to interpret it but smugly abolishes it instead, writing it off as a figment of the imagination of language.... [The] "young conservatism" of deconstruction encompasses elements that resonated closely with the new powers-that-be: a rejection, indeed denunciation of emancipatory projects, a return (with some notable exceptions) to an increasingly restrictive canon of texts, a reconstruction of literary studies as an elitist undertaking, and, especially the insistence on a definitive separation of literature from politics; the only revolution it imagines is the revolution in the literary text.

MPP5-632 DECONSTRUCTION ENDS IN INDIFFERENCE
Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.216.

One must seriously doubt whether an intellectual approach such as Derrida's, one that stakes so much on the negative moment of going beyond a "metaphysics of presence," is capable of attaining such levels of insight. "Presence," as embodied in the values of history, politics, and individual self-fulfillment, is also something that must be renewed and preserved. Thus, the omnipresent fear of a relapse into metaphysics can quickly turn into a paralyzing incapacity for qualitative intellectual judgment. Or, as an astute critic of deconstruction has suggested: "If deconstruction prevents us from asserting or stating or identifying anything, then surely one ends up, not with 'difference,' but with indifference, where nothing is anything, and everything is everything else?"

MPP5-633 DECONSTRUCTION LEADS TO A PARALYZING CYNICISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.211.

Yet "metaphysics" may not be the origin and ground of the contemporary cultural impasse or crisis. (For reasons that I can only hint at in the context at hand, I would like to suggest that the origins and grounds of this crisis are "historical" rather than "metaphysical"; and that Derrida, by following Heidegger in attributing such sovereign world-historical efficacy to "metaphysics," thereby indeed lapses into a type of "idealism." In the case of both thinkers, the problem is the same: the history of philosophy becomes a philosophy of history.) Moreover, it may be the case that a widespread postmetaphysical philosophical skepticism has led to a paralyzing cynicism concerning the capacity of thought for strong evaluation; that is, concerning its ability to distinguish between good and bad, the positive and the negative, the essential and the accidental.

MPP5-634 DECONSTRUCTION ISN'T APPROPRIATE FOR REAL WORLD PROBLEMS

Stanley Fish, Duke English and Law prof, *THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS FREE SPEECH*, 1994, p.18.

There is no slide to nihilism or relativism implied here; "going deep" is an analytical action performed by philosophers and metacritics in the privacy of their seminars; outside those seminars they, like the rest of us, move quite nicely on the very ground they have deconstructed.

MPP5-635 THE CHALLENGE OF DECONSTRUCTION IS TOO VAGUE TO BE USEFUL

John Ellis, Professor of German, University of California-Santa Cruz, *AGAINST DECONSTRUCTION*, 1989, p.149

But there is still another contradiction here; on the one hand, we are told that the ideas inherent in deconstruction are challenging, disturbing, provocative (and if there is one constant in all the descriptions of and claims for deconstruction, it is this); but on the other hand, we are also told, in effect, that the nature of the challenge cannot be precisely stated, because that would remove the challenge. To this it must be said that any challenge is by its nature sharp, specific, and clear: a challenge without a well-placed thrust is not a challenge at all.

MPP5-636 DECONSTRUCTION FAILS TO OFFER ALTERNATIVE IDEAS

John Ellis, Professor of German, University of California-Santa Cruz, *AGAINST DECONSTRUCTION*, 1989, p.41-2.

Perhaps the greatest general weakness of the deconstructive pattern of thinking is visible here--the tendency to place greatest emphasis on "putting in question" a given view, instead of moving on to search for a more viable idea representing a new and higher level of thought.

MPP5-637 DECONSTRUCTION FAILS TO DEAL WITH ACTUAL MORAL AND POLITICAL CONTINGENCIES
Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.214-15.

Yet since deconstruction rules out of play the "data" accrued by the social sciences, insofar they are still determined by the "principle of reason," hence, logocentric -- for "they never touch upon that which, in themselves, continues to be based on the principle of reason and thus on the essential foundation of the modern university. They never question scientific normativity, beginning with the value of objectivity or of objectivation, which governs and authorizes their discourse "its investigations of "democracy," the university," and "hierarchy" in general remain, as a matter of principle, empirically uninformed. Instead as others have pointed out, its researches are paradoxically confined to the "close reading" of certain canonical texts and thinkers -- Aristotle, Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, and so forth; a situation, moreover, that has given rise to a current of vigorous protest from within the ranks against deconstruction's patent refusal "to open onto an 'outside' constituted by ethico-political contingencies."

MPP5-638 ACCORDING TO FOUCAULT, DERRIDA CAN'T DEAL WITH SOCIAL REALITY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.200.

Derrida's approach to criticism, argues Foucault, remains exclusively textual. As an interpreter and critic, he leads us into the text from which, in turn, we never emerge. Themes and concerns that transcend the parameters of textuality -- above all, those that are related to questions of social reality, institutions, and power -- remain fully imperceptible from the standpoint of this rarefied, hyperlinguistic framework.

MPP5-639 DECONSTRUCTION IS NIHILISTIC

Paul Gross and Norman Levitt, University of Virginia Professor of Life Sciences and Rutgers University Professor of Mathematics, *HIGHER SUPERSTITION*, 1994, p.85

Notes Vincent Pecora, a literary critic of emphatic left-wing sympathies but scornful of deconstruction and its political consequences: "To many of Derrida's critics, the deconstructive rejection of humanism and the Enlightenment has seemed mere nihilism. But it is precisely this anti-'Western' stance that has been the key, I think, to the influence Derrida's work has had on a broad spectrum of the academic left."

MPP5-640 DERRIDEAN PHILOSOPHY IS ESSENTIALLY IRRATIONALIST

J.G. Merquior, King's College, London, *FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS*, 1986, p.226

Once removed from this original 'theological' and mystical framework, the Derridian ontology of absence makes for an irrationalist philosophy, as well the case with Heidegger. Hence its blatant non-sequiturs.

MPP5-641 DECONSTRUCTION REJECTS REASON, TRUTH AND KNOWLEDGE

J.G. Merquior, King's College, London, *FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS*, 1986, p.235

Well before the death of Foucault, deconstruction had already conquered a dominant position in post-structuralism. Its growing spate of texts, ever fulminating against 'Western logocentrism' in all forms, constitutes a glaring confirmation that the chief commitment of recent French new thought is an onslaught on the critical rationalist ethos of the Enlightenment tradition. Critical thinking is victimized by lofty proclamations of *Kulturkrisis*; crisis theory declares war on the rigours of critique. Such is the final consequence of the surrender of philosophy to the literary ideology forged by High Modernism. Every concern with objective knowledge is thrown overboard: no more of truth, reason, evidence or reference--they were just ploys of a repressive civilization . . . Yet nobody bothers to prove the point.

MPP5-642 DERRIDA CONVERTS LINGUISTICS INTO METAPHYSICAL MYSTICISM

J.G. Merquior, King's College, London, *FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS*, 1986, p.223-4

Derrida's grammatology employs Saussurean concepts such as 'difference' and 'signifier' to convey Heideggerian tenets. Thus Saussure's 'difference', which in the *Course in General Linguistics* humbly denotes the diacritical nature of linguistics signs, was converted into a portent of ever-delayed meaning based on a pun on difference (difference, a mix of differing and deferring): a modest scientific conceptual tool became burdened with an unexpected metaphysical load, quite alien to the original empirical analysis of semiotic phenomena. These metaphysical conceits turn deconstruction into a kind of blank mysticism. Difference theory beckons to a nowhere, a desert of being that is deemed to supersede all reality. To Mikel Dufrenne, it all comes down to an ontology of the void that recalls Plotinus: 'Because there is nothing in the One, all things derive from it; (for) in order for being to be, the One cannot be being, but the breeder of being' (*Enneads*, v, 2, I).

MPP5-643 DERRIDA IS AN IRRATIONALIST NIHILIST

J.G. Merquior, King's College, London, *FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS*, 1986, p.238

Foucault and Derrida have not just transmuted the disillusionment of the structuralist world-view into nihilism--they have also directed nihilism against truth. As a result, the countercultural idea is no longer just a romantic vision--it is also an openly irrationalist idiom of thought. But there is a difference. While in Foucault, a post-structuralist without a proper structuralist background, irrationalism was a question of Nietzschean premisses and conclusions that did not affect the style of exposition, in Derrida, it manages to engulf his very language.

MPP5-644 DECONSTRUCTION REJECTS CLEAR, RATIONAL EXPOSITION

John Ellis, Professor of German, University of California-Santa Cruz, *AGAINST DECONSTRUCTION*, 1989, p.10

The assumption here is evidently that rational analysis is inherently an inappropriate and unfair means of approaching deconstruction. Similarly, Steven Rendall has recently written that "Culler's measured, systematic and reassuring exposition risks exposing him to the charge that he is contributing to the recuperation and revitalization of deconstruction by the American critical establishment. I do not think the charge can be summarily dismissed." And Rendall points to the issue of "distortions" and "simplifications" in Culler's exposition, not as a specific matter of the particular points Culler has misstated when he when he could and should have stated them properly (for no examples are given), but rather as a general issue of distortion and simplification that must be present whenever any clear and rational exposition occurs.

MPP5-645 DECONSTRUCTION ATTEMPTS TO UNDERMINE RATIONALITY

John Searle, Professor of Philosophy, University of California-Berkeley, *WORKING THROUGH DERRIDA*, 1993, p.179

What are the results of deconstruction supposed to be? Characteristically the deconstructionist does not attempt to prove or refute, to establish or confirm, and he is certainly not seeking the truth. On the contrary, this whole family of concepts is part of the logocentrism he wants to overcome; rather he seeks to undermine, or call in question, or overcome, or breach, or disclose complicities. And the target is not just a set of philosophical and literary texts, but the Western conception of rationality and the set of presuppositions that underlie our conceptions of language, science, and common sense, such as the distinction between reality and appearance, and between truth and fiction.

MPP5-646 DECONSTRUCTION ISN'T CONCERNED WITH TRUTH

John Searle, Professor of Philosophy, University of California-Berkeley, *WORKING THROUGH DERRIDA*, 1993, p.187

The single most implausible claim that Mackey makes is that "the deconstructionist is almost obsessively occupied with truth." If he means to imply that they seek the truth, then a purely textual analysis of the works that I have cited would show that is simply not the case. Authors who are concerned with discovering the truth are concerned with evidence and reasons, with consistency and inconsistency, with logical consequences, explanatory adequacy, verification and testability. But all of this is part of the apparatus of the very "logocentrism" that deconstruction seeks to undermine.

MPP5-647 DERRIDA'S REJECTION OF SOCIAL SCIENCE UNDERMINES HIS ANALYSIS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *LABYRINTHS*, 1995, p.237-8.

In an earlier work Derrida, in neo-Heideggerian fashion, condemned the social sciences as a species of "techno-science" -- that is, for being in essence logocentric: "The term techno-science has to be accepted," observes Derrida, "and its acceptance confirms the fact that an essential affinity ties together objective knowledge, the principle of reason, and a certain metaphysical determination of the relation to truth." As a result of this condemnation, his understanding of late capitalist society seems empirically impoverished. Throughout his text one finds tantalizing yet superficial allusions to new social tendencies that are threatening to break through. In the last analysis, though, these innuendoes possess a merely gestural or rhetorical function. They are lacking in substance, in the type of empirical grounding that would provide them with the requisite cogency. As one reviewer has observed, Derrida's text displays a "systematic ... failure to engage genuinely with any of the social forces which he is concerned to regulate through revised, 'inspired' laws." Ultimately, the inspired rhetoricity of his text threatens to collapse amid the weight of platitudes and clichés. "At a time when a new world disorder attempts to install its neocapitalism and neoliberalism," remarks Derrida, "... hegemony still organizes the repression and thus the confirmation of a haunting." "No one, it seems to me, can contest the fact," he continues, "that a dogmatics is attempting to install its worldwide hegemony. . . ."

MPP5-648 DECONSTRUCTION CAN CAUSE DEBILITATING SKEPTICISM

Patricia Smith, Professor of Philosophy, University of Kentucky, *FEMINIST JURISPRUDENCE*, 1993, p.6-7

One problem with postmodern views, particularly those associated with deconstruction, is that they tend to be better at destroying theories than at building the, which may generate a debilitating skepticism that is not useful to the feminist cause in the long run. One response to this skepticism has been a revitalization of pragmatism within feminism. Pragmatism also subscribes to a postmodern antiessentialist theory of human nature and knowledge. In law it is associated with legal realist theory, which views law as a dynamic process of conflict resolution and focuses on the function of courts to analyze law and legal reasoning. Feminists are drawn to the practical, personal, contextual approach of pragmatism, which coincides with feminist rejection of traditional abstract categories, dichotomies, and the conceptual pretensions of the logical analysis of law.

MPP5-649 DERRIDA'S RADICAL SKEPTICISM IS JUST DISAPPOINTED ABSOLUTISM

J.G. Merquior, King's College, London, *FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS*, 1986, p.233

To Norris, Derrida's philosophical merit lies in his Nietzschean surpassing of the 'foundational' dreams of the Fregean. Yet one can turn the tables on such a claim. For one might say that, far from rejecting the foundationalist outlook, Derrida offers a mirror-image of it. In fact, precisely this charge was levelled at Derrida by an elder statesman of American criticism, M.H. Abrams. In a remarkable article in *Partisan Review*, "How to do things with texts" (1979), Abrams points out that Derrida's urge to deconstruct meaning is based on a curious non sequitur. From the fact that language lacks an ultimate ground, Derrida concludes that the work of meaning can only be deceptive. Texts may be legible, but they are not truly intelligible, since meaning is 'undecidable'. Thus in the end Derrida shares the belief that for determinate meanings to obtain, language must have an absolute foundation. Derrida, says Abrams, is 'an absolutist without absolutes'. Unlike the later Wittgenstein, he cannot bring himself to trust language games that do not have a bedrock of ultimate meanings. In a curious negative way, a belief in foundational meaning seems to have survived, in his thought, the demise of the transcendental signified. As so often, radical scepticism, about meaning as about almost everything else, is at bottom just a disappointed absolutism.

MPP5-650 DERRIDA DISSOLVES REALITY INTO LANGUAGE

J.G. Merquior, King's College, London, *FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS*, 1986, p.221

The roots of Derrida's mystique of the text lie in his pansemioticism -- in which reality is engulfed by the sign. From the assumption, which he has never bothered to prove, that every 'embodied' meaning leads directly to what Of Grammatology spurns as the 'transcendental signified', Derrida infers, in that same seminal book, that 'from the moment there is meaning there are nothing but signs'. Texts, of course, are clusters of signs. It follows that 'there is nothing outside the text' -- the saying that so infuriated Foucault.

MPP5-651 DECONSTRUCTION IMPROPERLY IGNORES TRUTH

David Couzens Hoy, Professor of Philosophy, University of California-Santa Cruz, *FOUCAULT: A CRITICAL READER*, 1986, p.20

That he rejects epistemological relativism is especially apparent from his attack on Derrida's reading of Plato. Foucault believes that the method of textual deconstruction tries incorrectly and unsuccessfully to bracket all questions about the truth claims of texts. He does not hesitate to claim that there are truths about how people do understand themselves and what sort of life they esteem.

MPP5-652 DERRIDA REJECTS OBJECTIVE REALITY

Paul Gross and Norman Levitt, University of Virginia Professor of Life Sciences and Rutgers University Professor of Mathematics, *HIGHER SUPERSTITION*, 1994, p.76

Derrida's deep epistemological pessimism has infected his disciples as much as have his stylistic eccentricities. Deconstructionism holds that truly meaningful utterance is impossible, that language is ultimately impotent, as are the mental operations conditioned by linguistic habit. The verbal means by which we seek to represent the world are incapable, it is said, of doing any such thing. Strings of words, whether on the page or in our heads, have at best a shadowy and unstable relation to reality. In fact "reality" is itself a mere construct, the persistent but illusory remnant of the Western metaphysical tradition. There is no reality outside the text, but texts themselves are vertiginously unstable, inherently self-contradictory and self-canceling.

MPP5-653 DECONSTRUCTION THOUGHT DESTROYS INTELLECTUAL STANDARDS

Paul Gross and Norman Levitt, University of Virginia Professor of Life Sciences and Rutgers University Professor of Mathematics, *HIGHER SUPERSTITION*, 1994, p.86

The role of the skepticism and relativism of the deconstructionists is also clear; if no text is "privileged," no narrative tradition closer to ethical, aesthetic, or historical truth than any other, then there are no grounds for regarding the traditional venues of humanist scholars--high literature and high art--as sacred ground. Thus, it becomes permissible for professors of English to inquire solemnly into what are by tradition (and in fact) trivial matters, and to festoon those inquiries with the abundant neologisms of the postmodern lexicon, giving thereby further assurance that the subject at hand, be it rap music or professional wrestling, has deep implications for theory.

MPP5-654 DERRIDA UNDERMINES THE ABILITY TO MAKE DISTINCTIONS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.210-11.

When one, in an oversimplifying fashion (one that may indeed be more characteristic of the purveyors of de-construction than of Derrida himself), equates "Grund" (ground or reason) with metaphysical violence, one potentially loses something indispensable: the capacity to make significant distinctions. By subjecting "ground" to the by now familiar deconstructive "double gesture" ("overturning" and "displacement"), does one not potentially lose the capacity to discriminate between warranted and unwarranted assertion? And by rendering this distinction problematical, "out of play" (*hors jeu*), have we not lost something truly essential? That is, isn't this a distinction that merits strengthening rather than "displacement"? And thus, Derrida's "fixation on metaphysics, and the pressing need he sees to battle its ideal essences at every turn divert his attention and energies from the real task of postmetaphysical thought." As opposed to the by now familiar deconstructive meditations on the "abyss," the latter would be defined by the attempt "to reconstruct the notions of reason, truth, objectivity, and the like in nonfoundationalist terms."

MPP5-655 DERRIDA IS AN ANTI-HUMANIST

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY, 1995, p.195.

At times, in fact, Derrida seems to out-Heidegger Heidegger. For it is not 'persons' who 'control difference' -- still less society -- but, vaguely and impersonally, 'systems', thereby reifying beyond lived experience and history the way in which differences 'reveal' themselves. Aside from the similarities between the two men, the differences between them are advances and retreats, clarifications and obfuscations, around their respective degrees of antihumanism."

MPP5-656 DERRIDA'S AND FOUCAULT'S KRITIK OF MODERNITY EMBODIES TOTAL PESSIMISM

J.G. Merquior, King's College, London, FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS, 1986, p.237.

In France, by contrast, chiefly in the schools of Foucault and Derrida, the antinomian stance vis a vis the culture of modernity broke with every vestige of anthropological optimism, with every positive appreciation of humanity or polity. Antinomianism without Utopian ingredients became the rule.

MPP5-657 THE KRITIK RESTS ON A FALSE BELIEF IN CULTURAL CRISIS

J.G. Merquior, King's College, London, FROM PRAGUE TO PARIS, 1986, p.240

The kind of theory represented by Derrideanism must be treated less as philosophy *stricto sensu* than as a new style of free-wheeling, essayistic cultural criticism with an apocalyptic spirit. Its content is not a set of arguments but an axiom of debunking-- the indictment of modern culture; and its method consists in pinpointing crises in the latter's main assumptions about truth and knowledge. Modern culture is deemed to be in crisis because its mental set is 'shown' to be fallacious; Kulturkritik presupposes a Kulturkrisis. However, what if one turns the table against it? What if the crisis, too, has no referent? For it may well be that behind the cultural void and trash alleged by advanced nihilist thought there is nothing to be apprehended. The crisis, then, would be less an object than a product of countercultural thought.

MPP5-658 DERRIDA TO THE CONTRARY, WE SHOULDN'T REMAIN OPEN TO ALL OTHERS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, LABYRINTHS, 1995, p.233.

In certain respects, the problematic of otherness as raised by Derrida raises more questions than it is able to solve. One can for example think of "others" -- neo-Nazis, white supremacists, racists -- who for compelling reasons have forfeited their right to my openness. Should or must I remain open to all others in precisely the same way -- my wife, colleagues, friends, perfect strangers, enemies?

MPP5-659 LYOTARD AND RORTY ARE LEADING POSTMODERNISTS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.7

I have chosen to discuss Rorty because he is the most influential representative of the Anglo-American branch of postmodern politics. Of the influential European proponents, I have chosen to concentrate my analysis on Lyotard and Foucault. I have chosen Lyotard not only because in making the term postmodern familiar to many philosophic audiences he is an obvious choice, but also because he most directly enters into debate with Rorty over how postmodern politics ought to be expressed postmodernism means skepticism toward meta-narratives.

MPP5-660 POSTMODERNISM MEANS SKEPTICISM TOWARD META-NARRATIVES

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, THE POSTMODERN CONDITION, 1984, p.xxiv.

Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity toward metanarratives. This incredulity is undoubtedly a product of progress in the sciences: but that progress in turn presupposes it. To the obsolescence of the metanarrative apparatus of legitimation corresponds, most notably, the crisis of metaphysical philosophy and of the university institution which in the past relied on it. The narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal. It is being dispersed in clouds of narrative language elements -- narrative, but also denotative, prescriptive, descriptive, and so on. Conveyed within each cloud are pragmatic valencies specific to its kind. Each of us lives at the intersection of many of these. However, we do not necessarily establish stable language combinations, and the properties of the ones we do establish are not necessarily communicable.

MPP5-661 THE POSTMODERN AGE HAS BEEN EMERGING SINCE THE 1950S

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, THE POSTMODERN CONDITION, 1984, p.3.

Our working hypothesis is that the status of knowledge is altered as societies enter what is known as the postindustrial age and cultures enter what is known as the postmodern age. This transition has been under way since at least the end of the 1950s, which for Europe marks the completion of reconstruction. The pace is faster or slower depending on the country, and within countries it varies according to the sector of activity: the general situation is one of temporal disjunction which makes sketching an overview difficult. A portion of the description would necessarily be conjectural. At any rate, we know that it is unwise to put too much faith in futurology.

MPP5-662 KNOWLEDGE AND POWER ARE INDISSOLUBLY LINKED

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, *THE POSTMODERN CONDITION*, 1984, p.8-9.

The parallel may appear forced. But as we will see, it is not. The question of the legitimacy of science has been indissociably linked to that of the legitimization of the legislator since the time of Plato. From this point of view, the right to decide what is true is not independent of the right to decide what is just, even if the statements consigned to these two authorities differ in nature. The point is that there is a strict interlinkage between the kind of language called science and the kind called ethics and politics: they both stem from the same perspective, the same "choice" if you will -- the choice called the Occident. When we examine the current status of scientific knowledge -- at a time when science seems more completely subordinated to the prevailing powers than ever before and, along with the new technologies, is in danger of becoming a major stake in their conflicts -- the question of double legitimization, far from receding into the background, necessarily comes to the fore. For it appears in its most complete form, that of reversion, revealing that knowledge and power are simply two sides of the same question: who decides what knowledge is, and who knows what needs to be decided? In the computer age, the question of knowledge is now more than ever a question of government.

MPP5-663 LYOTARD REJECTS THE HEGEMONY OF RATIONALITY

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.27-8.

This notion of a multiplicity of justices would be a genuinely pluralist notion of justice for it would militate against all the hierarchical privileging found in the tradition of grand narratives, against all "sacred cows." In her instructive review of Lyotard's *Instructions Paliennes* (translated into English under the title *Just Gaming*) Cecile Lindsay fleshes out Lyotard's pluralist conception of justice (his paganism) in terms of a rejection of piety: This relativised vision of discourse leads to the rejection of ... the pious attitude of belief or conviction that had made the dominant response to the various 'grand narratives' of the past "a persistent piety for the passion of the true throughout history." A sustained effort at paganism would level all narratives, denying to any one narrative the privilege of speaking, or translating to others. Thus theoretical narratives such as those proposed by Marxism, speculative philosophy, aesthetics, or capitalism, fall from their place on the pious hierarchy and stand as equals among a virtually infinite set of competing conflictual alternative narratives. One of the things this anti-pietism leads to is the rejection of the old conception of rationality as an overarching concept. Once one rejects grand narratives, legitimization can no longer reside in matching a single conception of what is rational or right.

MPP5-664 LYOTARD REJECTS REASON AS A BASIS FOR POLITICS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.17-18.

But if there is no standard which could speak to the multifarious interests, desires -- "personalities" if you will -- of the schizophrenic self, there will also be no standard which could serve as an intersubjective (objective) or social (moral) guide or standard of judgment; "if all opinions are acceptable, then I cannot decide" (JG 81). And if the meaning of a name cannot be fixed, then moral judgments about what that name stands for or refers to is always a matter of opinion. Hence Lyotard's claim: "There is no politics of reason, neither in the sense of a totalizing reason nor in that of the concept. And so we must do with a politics of opinion" (JG 82). This has the consequence that for Lyotard consensus and community will necessarily be equated with the false imposition of unifying structure. It also determines the limits of justice: a just situation will be one in which all potential narrators are allowed to exercise their ability to narrate from their individual perspectives, where none of the narrative poles hold privilege over any other. This demands of justice that it be a multiplicity.

MPP5-665 FOR LYOTARD, SCIENCE SUPPRESSES OTHER FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.88.

Lyotard's description, in *The Postmodern Condition*, of the connivance of capitalism and science in an attempt to substitute scientific knowledge for other forms of narrative knowledge raises the question of the legitimization of science, a question that can only be answered through the narrative knowledge scientific practice often seems to replace. Thus, this at, tempted substitution helped keep narrative knowledge alive in an era dominated by scientific knowledge.

MPP5-666 SCIENCE DENIGRATES OTHER FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM*, 1994, p.92-3.

One of the most sustained attempts to address the political effects of knowledge, though, is Jean-Francois Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition*. In it, he describes the emergence of scientific knowledge as a dominant mode of understanding the world, a mode whose political effects included that of denigrating other modes of knowledge by imposing the requirement that in order to qualify as knowledge, a discourse had to conform to the norms of rigorous proof, purely denotative utterances, and performative efficiency. These requirements converged with the capitalist political project of domination over nature and others: "An equation between wealth, efficiency, and knowledge is thus established."

MPP5-667 LYOTARD ATTACKS THE HEGEMONY OF SCIENCE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.18.

Lyotard attacks terror from many angles: politically, as constituting injustice, aesthetically as stifling alternative expression. In *The Postmodern Condition*, his attack was against the normalizing structure of modern science. Here terror is primarily used to denote the Western model of science/rationality and the hegemony of techno-knowledge, which is built up around the performativity principle.

MPP5-668 THE HEGEMONY OF SCIENCE PRODUCES CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, *THE POSTMODERN CONDITION*, 1984, p.27.

The scientist questions the validity of narrative statements and concludes that they are never subject to argumentation or proof. He classifies them as belonging to a different mentality: savage, primitive, underdeveloped, backward, alienated, composed of opinions, customs, authority, prejudice, ignorance, ideology. Narratives are fables, myths, legends, fit only for women and children. At best, attempts are made to throw some rays of light into this obscurantism, to civilize, educate, develop. This unequal relationship is an intrinsic effect of the rules specific to each game. We all know its symptoms. It is the entire history of cultural imperialism from the dawn of Western civilization. It is important to recognize its special tenor, which sets it apart from all other forms of imperialism: it is governed by the demand for legitimation.

MPP5-669 SCIENCE IS ONLY ONE FORM OF KNOWLEDGE

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, *THE POSTMODERN CONDITION*, 1984, p.18.

Knowledge [savoir] in general cannot be reduced to science, nor even to learning [connaissance]. Learning is the set of statements which, to the exclusion of all other statements, denote or describe objects and may be declared true or false. Science is a subset of learning. It is also composed of denotative statements, but imposes two supplementary conditions on their acceptability: the objects to which they refer must be available for repeated access, in other words, they must be accessible in explicit conditions of observation; and it must be possible to decide whether or not a given statement pertains to the language judged relevant by the experts. But what is meant by the term knowledge is not only a set of denotative statements, far from it, it also includes notions of "knowhow," "knowing how to live," "how to listen" [savoir-faire, savoir-vivre, savoir-ecouter], etc. Knowledge, then, is a question of competence that goes beyond the simple determination and application of the criterion of truth, extending to the determination and application of criteria of efficiency (technical qualification), of justice and/or happiness (ethical wisdom), of the beauty of a sound or color (auditory and visual sensibility), etc.

MPP5-670 SCIENCE COMPETES WITH OTHER FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, *THE POSTMODERN CONDITION*, 1984, p.7.

In the first place, scientific knowledge does not represent the totality of knowledge; it has always existed in addition to, and in competition and conflict with, another kind of knowledge, which I will call narrative in the interests of simplicity (its characteristics will be described later). I do not mean to say that narrative knowledge can prevail over science, but its model is related to ideas of internal equilibrium and conviviality next to which contemporary scientific knowledge cuts a poor figure, especially if it is to undergo an exteriorization with respect to the "knower" and an alienation from its user even greater than has previously been the case.

MPP5-671 LYOTARD SUPPORTS NARRATIVE BUT NOT META-NARRATIVE

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.166-7.

Lyotard, like Hesse, wants to soften this contrast and to assert the rights of "narrative knowledge." In particular, he wants to answer his initial question by saying that once we get rid of the metanarratives, legitimacy resides where it always has, in the first-order narratives: There is, then, an incommensurability between popular narrative pragmatics, which provides immediate legitimation, and the language game known as the question of legitimacy. . . . Narratives . . . determine criteria of competence and/or illustrate how they are to be applied. They thus define what has the right to be said and done in the culture in question, and since they are themselves a part of that culture, they are legitimated by the simple fact that they do what they do."

MPP5-672 NARRATIVE IS AS NECESSARY AS SCIENCE

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, *THE POSTMODERN CONDITION*, 1984, p.26.

First, drawing a parallel between science and nonscientific (narrative) knowledge helps us understand, or at least sense, that the former's existence is no more -- and no less -- necessary than the latter's. Both are composed of sets of statements; the statements are "moves" made by the players within the framework of generally applicable rules; these rules are specific to each particular kind of knowledge, and the "moves" judged to be "good" in one cannot be of the same type as those judged "good" in another, unless it happens that way by chance.

MPP5-673 SCIENCE CAN'T REFUTE NARRATIVE

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, *THE POSTMODERN CONDITION*, 1984, p.26-7.

It is therefore impossible to judge the existence or validity of narrative knowledge on the basis of scientific knowledge and vice versa: the relevant criteria are different. All we can do is gaze in wonderment at the diversity of discursive species, just as we do at the diversity of plant or animal species. Lamenting the "loss of meaning" in postmodernity boils down to mourning the fact that knowledge is no longer principally narrative. Such a reaction does not necessarily follow. Neither does an attempt to derive or engender (using operators like development) scientific knowledge from narrative knowledge, as if the former contained the latter in an embryonic state.

MPP5-674 NARRATIVE IS THE MAJOR FORM OF TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, *THE POSTMODERN CONDITION*, 1984, p.19.

It is fair to say that there is one point on which all of the investigations agree, regardless of which scenario they propose to dramatize and understand the distance separating the customary state of knowledge from its state in the scientific age: the preeminence of the narrative form in the formulation of traditional knowledge. Some study this form for its own sake; others see it as the diachronic costume of the structural operators that, according to them, properly constitute the knowledge in question; still others bring to it an "economic" interpretation in the Freudian sense of the term. All that is important here is the fact that its form is narrative. Narration is the quintessential form of customary knowledge, in more ways than one.

MPP5-675 LYOTARD'S POLITICS UPHOLD THE INTERESTS OF THE MARGINALIZED

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.19.

Lyotard's political ideal is to give expression to those parts of our selves, or those voices, which have been marginalized or rendered inexpressible by the demands of unity and stability -- demands which violate the heterogeneous nature of language and the self. This ideal is worked out throughout his writing.

MPP5-676 FOR LYOTARD, LANGUAGE IS INHERENTLY POLITICAL

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.18-19.

Phrases and the linking of phrases are artificial and strategic. This is the case because, since language is a differential system, phrases and linkages always and necessarily exclude other possible phrases and linking of phrases (repress and suppress difference). Because Lyotard believes that every way of speaking suppresses other possibilities, that "every reality entails possible unknown meanings," he believes that language is always political: "Everything is political if politics is the possibility of the different on the occasion of the slightest linkage."

MPP5-677 LYOTARD'S POLITICS STRESS PROTECTING THE SELF FROM OUTSIDE ENCROACHMENT

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.15.

Lyotard operates on the belief that these four characteristics delimit the genuine (even if he would be uncomfortable using this word) nature of the self, and it is this self which his political theory is meant to protect and his aesthetic theory meant to celebrate. In general, his philosophy revolves around the attempt to protect the self against encroaching systems of unity and order which would force the subject to conform to artificial limits, structures, or modes of expression. The postmodern political project is dedicated to finding ways of presenting what has hitherto been unexpressed or silenced, or in Lyotard's terms, to finding ways of expressing or alluding to the "unpresentable." The task is to free expression from all subordinating logics, to put under suspicion what only yesterday has been received, to rejoice in "the invention of new rules of the game" (PMC 80). The task is one of "derealization" (PMC, 78).

MPP5-678 FOR LYOTARD, ALL LIMITS ON THE SELF ARE TERRORISTIC

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.21.

By "terror" Lyotard means to denote anything which would contain or delimit the unbounded nature of the self. This would include forcing a single or particular definition or mode of expression on a subject (or decontextualizing legitimacy), for given the nature of the self we have been describing, to define would be to limit, and therefore, in Lyotard's terms, to terrorize. The "open system" model proposed by Lyotard, on the other hand, is prevented from being equated with terror because it possesses no general metalanguage in which all other languages could be transcribed and evaluated (PMC 64.).

MPP5-679 FOR LYOTARD, OPEN STRUCTURES ARE LIBERATING AND NORMALIZING STRUCTURES ARE TERRORISTIC

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.21.

The self which is radically undetermined by the infinite variety of play and difference is, in the words of Jameson, dissolved into a "host of networks and relations, of contradictory codes and interfering messages" (PMC xviii-xiv). Lyotard's need to protect and encourage free expression of this self leads him to champion "open systems" - "one[s]" in which a statement becomes relevant if it 'generates ideas,' that is, if it generates other statements and other game rules" (PMC 64) and to challenge all normalizing structures (stases) as being, wittingly or not, a form of terror. The terrorist system would be one which proclaims: "'Adapt your aspirations to our ends-or else'" (PMC 63), which demands that everyone speak in a single voice.

MPP5-681 FOR LYOTARD, THERE IS NO UNIVERSAL STANDARD OF JUSTICE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.27.

This notion of language and the scope of the domain of linguistic rules have the following impact on Lyotard's notion of Justice: there are no universal rules to apply in cases of Justice, no universal or context-free criteria of judgment; no "Gods." Instead of a single standard of justice ruling between different practices, there is only a multiplicity of justices each of which is peculiar to, and only has relevance within, its particular pragmatic context. Thus all voices would have equal legitimacy and would be free of the leveling impulse of grand narratives. Legitimacy then is relative to the pragmatic context of localized narratives and as narratives are multiple, so too are criteria of legitimation. This states in a nutshell his radical idea of justice as being a multiplicity.

MPP5-682 LYOTARD UPHOLDS THE MULTIPLICITY OF JUSTICE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.28.

This rejection of rationality challenges the West's traditional conception of Justice with its claim to legitimization of its political and cultural hegemony, and it is precisely because pagan justice refuses all justification for imperialism and hegemony of whatever kind that Lyotard can claim that the adoption of his position makes us more sensitive to and tolerant of difference. No position can claim privilege, can claim to be more rational, more just, more humane. Rather, legitimacy resides in the recognition of and respect for the multiplicity and context-dependent nature of language games: each language game constitutes, to use Lyotard's phraseology, a "sovereign" realm, for the acknowledgment that any and all justifications are pragmatic and context-dependent relative to a particular language game forces the recognition of the sovereignty of each game, a recognition which will, he thinks, guarantee freedom and the elimination of repression. Each language game has its own rules by which a move made within (and only within) that game can be judged: . . . there is first a multiplicity of justices, each of them defined in relation to the rules specific to each game. These rules prescribe what must be done so that a denotative statement, or an interrogative one, or a prescriptive one, etc., is received as such and recognized as "good" in accordance with the criteria of the game to which it belongs (JG 100).

MPP5-682 GIVING EVERYONE A VOICE IS KEY TO JUSTICE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.30.

The pagan notion of a multiplicity of justice thus (at least in theory) necessitates reconceptualizing politics as a politics of difference where otherness is not only expected, but encouraged. A just situation will be one which recognizes and allows all potential participants to have a voice, to narrate from their own perspective. This is what the recognition of the sovereignty of language games is at least meant to achieve. To define justice as a multiplicity is to prohibit the terror by which one system attempts to impose itself upon another, asserting itself as the dominant (correct) game. This would amount to a gross injustice because it would silence multiplicity and it is precisely this kind of injustice that Lyotard is working to prohibit.

MPP5-683 LYOTARD'S CONCEPT OF JUSTICE UPHOLDS THE VALUE OF DIFFERENCE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.30.

Lyotard's pagan reconception of justice as multiplicity offers many attractions for the person committed to a politics of difference: this idea of justice expands the political sphere to include those whose voices have been silenced because they speak in terms other than those legitimated by the dominant model. In line with his picture of the diversity of language and his repudiation of metanarratives, along with the notion of a decentered self which follows upon this picture of language, Lyotard's ideal of justice as multiplicity calls to our attention the political nature of any theory which assumes unity and stability. Such theories may be terroristic, they may hide an urge to repress otherness.

MPP5-684 LYOTARD SEES THE SILENCING OF THE OTHERS AS INJUSTICE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.19.

Elsewhere Lyotard suggests the many ways one might be silenced: An injustice would be an injury accompanied by the loss of the means to prove the injury. This is the case if the victim is deprived of life, or of all his liberties, or of the liberty to make public his ideas of opinions, or simply of the right to testify to the injury, or even more simply if the phrasing of the testimony is itself deprived of authority [my emphasis]. in all of these cases, to the privation constituted by the injury there is added the impossibility of bringing it to the knowledge of others, and notably to the knowledge of a tribunal (Diac 5).

MPP5-685 HUMAN DIFFERENCE PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.136.

"It seems that a man who is nothing but a man has lost the very qualities which make it possible for others to treat him as a fellow man." With this sentence, taken from the study on Imperialism which forms the second part of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), Hannah Arendt defines the fundamental condition of human rights: A human being has rights only if he is other than a human being. And if he is to be other than a human being, he must in addition become an other human being. Then "the others" can treat him as their fellow human being. What makes human beings alike is the fact that every human being carries within him the figure of the other. The likeness that they have in common follows from the difference of each from each.

MPP5-686 SPEECH FACULTY PROVIDES A BASIS FOR UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Ronald Slye, Associate Director, Center for International Human Rights, Yale Law School, *FORDHAM INTERNATIONAL LAW JOURNAL*, 1995, p.1576.

Rorty correctly identifies the phenomenon of "the other" as at least a partial explanation of why a great many people treat their fellow human beings in a horrible and degrading fashion. Lyotard uses the concept of "the other" as the starting point for his essay, but unlike Rorty, uses reason and human nature to argue that all human beings should be treated alike. Specifically, Lyotard points out that only humans have the faculty of locution. Because humans can both speak and listen, they each carry "the other" within themselves, and thus can identify "us" in the other.

MPP5-687 SILENCING AND IGNORING THE OTHER IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Ronald Slye, Associate Director, Center for International Human Rights, Yale Law School, *FORDHAM INTERNATIONAL LAW JOURNAL*, 1995, p.1577.

Because Lyotard raises interlocution as the defining faculty of human beings, he also identifies the act of silencing as a fundamental human rights violation. This is an interesting notion as Lyotard applies it to Nazi death camp victims. Not only were these victims subject to torture and murder, but they were also silenced, and thus forgotten both by their torturers and, at the time, by most of the rest of the world. They were not spoken to, but were spoken at, treated as objects, or ignored.

MPP5-688 SPEECH CREATES HUMAN COMMONALITY

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.138

The instances I and you cannot merge, since while the one speaks the other speaks no longer or not yet. I and you are deictics, and as such are correlated with now, and now designates the present of speech. From it, the temporality of past and future unfold. But relative to the capacity to speak, which by definition is not confined to the present but extends to every possible interlocution, I and you are alike. Persons capable of speech alternately occupy the instance I and the instance you. When they say I, they are a past or future you, and when they are in the position of you, they are so because they have spoken or will speak as I.

MPP5-689 HUMAN RIGHTS DERIVE FROM INCLUSION IN THE HUMAN SPEECH COMMUNITY

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.140.

There is no a priori limit to the interlocutory capacity. By its association with the recursiveness and translatability of human language, it cannot help but bind all human speakers in a speech community. From this effective (de facto) power there arises what I shall term an effect of right (un effet de droit). If any human being can be an interlocutor for other human beings, he must be able to, that is, must be enabled or allowed to. We move from the potential implied by competence to the permission implied by entitlement.

MPP5-690 SPEECH IS THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.140-1.

Let us take it that the capacity to speak to others is a human right, and perhaps the most fundamental human right. If the use of this capacity is forbidden, whether de facto, by some injustice of fate, or on principle, for example as a punishment, a harm is inflicted on the speaker thus constrained. He is set apart from the speech community of interlocutors. To no one is he any longer someone other, nor is anyone now his other. There are many ways of imposing silence. Amnesty International knows them better than anyone. Its vocation is modest but decisive. It is minimal. Amnestos meant he who is forgotten. Amnesty does not demand that the judgment be revised or that the convicted man be rehabilitated. It simply asks that the institution that has condemned him to silence forget this decree and restore the victim to the community of speakers.

MPP5-691 EXCLUSION FROM THE SPEECH COMMUNITY IS A BASIC WRONG

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.144

Even the good silence of the writer, the monk, or the pupil contains an element of suffering. Any banishment is a harm inflicted on those who undergo it, but this harm necessarily changes to a wrong when the victim is excluded from the speech community. For the wrong is the harm to which the victim cannot testify, since he cannot be heard. And this is precisely the case of those to whom the right to speak to others is refused.

MPP5-692 HUMAN RIGHTS ARE GROUNDED IN THE RESPECT FOR THE OTHER

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.147

The law says: Thou shalt not kill. Which means: you shall not refuse to others the role of interlocutor. But the law that forbids the crime of abjection nonetheless evokes its abiding threat or temptation. Interlocution is authorized only by respect for the Other, in my words and in yours.

MPP5-693 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS WRONG BECAUSE IT EXCLUDES FROM THE SPEECH COMMUNITY

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.144

The right to impose silence which the community grants itself as a sanction is always dangerous. The death sentence evidently does an irremediable wrong to the condemned man, even if he is guilty of a heinous crime. But in relation to our present topic, death is not necessarily the wrong done to him. There are, as the Greeks put it, "beautiful deaths," of which the citizens continue to speak long afterward. It happens that a speaker is more eloquent dead than alive, and does not therefore die for the community. So we must reverse the relation: It is the wrong which is the cause of death, since it implies the exclusion of the speaker from the speech community. The community will not even speak of this exclusion since the victim will be unable to report it and cannot therefore defend himself or appeal.

MPP5-694 KILLING OTHERS BANISHES ONE FROM THE HUMAN COMMUNITY

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.136.

Thou shalt not kill thy fellow human being: To kill a human being is not to kill an animal of the species *Homo sapiens*, but to kill the human community present in him as both capacity and promise. And you also kill it in yourself. To banish the stranger is to banish the community, and you banish yourself from the community thereby.

MPP5-695 LYOTARD BELIEVES IN RADICAL PLURALISM

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.15.

Lyotard's equation of consensus, commensurability, unity, homology, and efficiency with terror (which, along with his defense of paralogy, will be discussed in greater detail below) is at least understandable, if not necessarily defensible, once we recognize that his understanding of language and the self structured in this language commits him to defend what he calls the "pagan ideal" -- an ideal which in my terminology amounts to radical pluralism.

MPP5-696 LYOTARD ENDORSES THE IDEA OF MULTIPLE LANGUAGE GAMES

Todd May, Professor of Philosophy, Clemson, THE POLITICAL THEORY OF POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANARCHISM, 1994, p.95.

If genealogy traces the political formation of social objects that we take for granted as natural and neutral, the politics that issues from it must inevitably be a politics of diffusion and multiplicity, a politics that confronts power in a variety of irreducible and often surprising places. In short, the politics to which genealogy gives birth must be a micropolitics. As Lyotard observes: [I]f one has the viewpoint of a multiplicity of language games, if one has the hypothesis that the social bond is not made up of a single type of statement, or, if you will, of discourse, but that it is made up of several types of these games, of which a certain number is known, then it follows that, to put it quickly, social partners are caught up in pragmatics that are different from each other.... And the idea that I think we need today in order to make decisions in political matters cannot be the idea of a totality, or of the unity, of a body. It can only be the idea of a multiplicity or a diversity.

MPP5-697 LYOTARD REJECTS CONSENSUS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.22.

For Lyotard the goal of dialogue cannot, and must not, be consensus: "Heterogeneity makes consensus impossible" (D 192); for consensus is "only a particular state of discussion, but not its end." Rather, the end must be paralogy, dissent. Whereas consensus closes off the unrepresentable, paralogy allows its possibilities to remain open. Paralogy is thus endemic to the pagan ideal because it fights against the imposition of terror in all its forms by encouraging alternative ideas and modes of expression. For Lyotard "invention is always born of dissension." This is why The Postmodern Condition defines postmodern knowledge as the search for instabilities. He is seeking not to limit forms of expression, but to open us up to the unrepresentable. As opposed to techno-knowledge or knowledge dominated by the performance principle, "postmodern knowledge is then not simply a tool of the authorities; it refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable. Its principle is not the expert's homology, but the inventor's paralogy" (PMC xxv).

MPP5-698 COMMUNICATIVE CONSENSUS IS AN ILLUSION

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, *THE POSTMODERN CONDITION*, 1984, p.xxv.

Is legitimacy to be found in consensus obtained through discussion, as Jurgen Habermas thinks? Such consensus does violence to the heterogeneity of language games. And invention is always born of dissension. Postmodern knowledge is not simply a tool of the authorities; it refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable. Its principle is not the expert's homology, but the inventor's paralogy.

MPP5-699 POSTMODERNISM LEADS TO THE OBSOLESCENCE OF THE STATE

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, *THE POSTMODERN CONDITION*, 1984, p.5.

However, the perspective I have outlined above is not as simple as I have made it appear. For the mercantilization of knowledge is bound to affect the privilege the nation-states have enjoyed, and still enjoy, with respect to the production and distribution of learning. The notion that learning falls within the purview of the State, as the brain or mind of society, will become more and more outdated with the increasing strength of the opposing principle, according to which society exists and progresses only if the messages circulating within it are rich in information and easy to decode. The ideology of communicational "transparency," which goes hand in hand with the commercialization of knowledge, will begin to perceive the State as a factor of opacity and "noise." It is from this point of view that the problem of the relationship between economic and State powers threatens to arise with a new urgency.

MPP5-700 INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL FLOWS UNDERMINE THE NATION STATE

Jean-Francois Lyotard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris, *THE POSTMODERN CONDITION*, 1984, p.5-6.

Already in the last few decades, economic powers have reached the point of imperiling the stability of the State through new forms of the circulation of capital that go by the generic name of multinational corporations. These new forms of circulation imply that investment decisions have, at least in part, passed beyond the control of the nation-states." The question threatens to become even more thorny with the development of computer technology and telematics. Suppose, for example, that a firm such as IBM is authorized to occupy a belt in the earth's orbital field and launch communications satellites or satellites housing data banks. Who will have access to them? Who will determine which channels or data are forbidden? The State? Or will the State simply be one user among others? New legal issues will be raised, and with them the question: "who will know?"

MPP5-701 LYOTARD IS UNABLE TO TRULY ABANDON GRAND NARRATIVES

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.47.

Thus, Lyotard's search for an Idea of Justice over and above the multiplicity of justices is evidence of the fact that he was unable to give up the idea of philosophical foundations repudiated in his disavowal of grand narratives.

MPP5-702 LYOTARD IS AN IRRATIONALIST

Murray Bookchin, Institute for Social Ecology co-founder, *RE-ENCHANTING HUMANITY*, 1995, p.200.

More important, for our purposes, is that Lyotard exhibits a sturdy hostility to reason, objectivity, and truth. All events are really narratives; their 'objectivity' consists in whether we commit them to paper as a narrative or not.

MPP5-703 ACCORDING TO HABERMAS, LYOTARD UNDERMINES RATIONAL CRITIQUE

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *DERRIDA*, 1987, p.169

This quarrel between Habermas and French post-modernism has been the topic of intense discussion recently, so I shall do no more than summarize the main issues here. What is most important is Habermas's line of counter-argument: that post-modernists like Lyotard are giving themselves over to a form of unprincipled pragmatism which renounces the very possibility of reasoned critique. And in doing so they are effectively depriving thought of any power to engage with social and political realities on other than passively conformist terms.

MPP5-704 LYOTARD'S THOUGHT UNDERMINES CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.41.

But in thus defending the transcendence of the idea, in thus aligning himself with the Kantian (Rawlsian) tradition that requires that in universalizing the maxim one must abstract from one's particular heteronomous nature, in acting as if one can listen objectively, neutrally, etc., Lyotard does not simply not provide us with a means of evaluating difference, he more insidiously removes the possibility of genuine critical analysis-of questioning authority. If there is one lesson of the postmodern/poststructuralist that must be incorporated into any forward-thinking political theory, it is the fact that there is no neutral standpoint. Prescriptive utterances always come from a particular standpoint, and justice must demand an evaluation of that context, both for the values endemic to that particular standpoint, and also to see how it effects other possibilities. But Lyotard forecloses on such evaluation.

MPP5-705 LYOTARD'S THOUGHT LEADS TO INTELLECTUAL ANARCHY

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM*, 1994, p.25-6.

But it is equally the case -- as with postmodernists; like Rorty and Lyotard -- that the wholesale revolt against Enlightenment thinking gives rise to a form of discursive 'anarchy', a species of cognitive and ethico-political relativism pushed to the point where criticism is powerless against those same (nowadays resurgent) dogmatic truth-claims. Such, after all, is the lesson often derived from Wittgenstein, Lyotard, and other proponents of the view that every language-game (or discourse) disposes of its own sui generis criteria, so that the best we can do -- in the interests of justice -- is acknowledge this open multiplicity of life-forms and give up the attempt to criticize 'truths' or values different from our own. And this (be it noted) at a time when fundamentalist creeds of various description Christian, Islamic, nationalist, free-market capitalist, and so forth -- are vigorously asserting their claim to supersede not only the secular discourse of Enlightenment but also its associated values of participant democracy, liberty of conscience, social welfare, and egalitarian reform.

MPP5-706 LYOTARD'S APPROACH UNDERMINES ENLIGHTENED HUMAN UNDERSTANDING

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM*, 1994, p.55-6.

Of course this argument would cut little ice with a postmodern sceptic like Lyotard, one for whom a mere listing of events over the past two centuries -- wars, revolutions, counter-revolutions, the whole sorry spectacle to date -- is warrant enough for dismissing that project as the merest of transient illusions. And no doubt there are reasons nearer home (among them the melancholy wisdom of hindsight prevalent in the post-1968 generation of French intellectuals) which have also left their mark. One might respond by recalling Gramsci's words -- 'pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will' -- set down at a time, and in personal circumstances, far worse than anything confronted by these present-day thinkers. But one could also point out the philosophical confusions, notably the angled misreadings of Kant, that lead them on the one hand to treat the sublime as a master-trope of radical heterogeneity, driving a wedge between the cognitive and evaluative orders of discourse, and on the other - at the opposite extreme - to construe the record (the evidential witness) of past and present events as a standing rebuke to enlightened ideas of reason, truth, and social justice. What this betokens is a failure to engage adequately with thinkers in the 'other' tradition of critical theory, that which runs (broadly speaking) from Kant to Habermas, and which figures for postmodernists like Lyotard only as a pretext for highly selective or revisionist readings. The result, as I have argued, is to promulgate a range of quasi-radical ideas -- philosophy as just another 'kind of writing', history as likewise a textual or fictive construct, ethics as the encounter with an 'absolute alterity' conceived on the structuralist model of linguistic difference -- which work to undermine every last prospect of enlightened human understanding.

MPP5-707 LYOTARD IS UNWILLING TO DEFEND THE HISTORICAL VALIDITY OF THE HOLOCAUST

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM*, 1994, p.115

Such is the conclusion drawn by Lyotard when he discusses Robert Faurisson's outrageous thesis that for all we can know the gas-ovens at Auschwitz were never used for the mass extermination of Jewish and other victims since none of those victims has survived to verify the claim. To which, one might think, there is a simple (but by no means simple-minded) line of response -- that this is just a piece of sophistical chicanery, and that there exist many kinds of evidence besides that of first-hand documentary or ocular witness. But Lyotard replies -- true to postmodernist form -- by invoking his notion of the 'differend' as that which enjoins us to respect the heterogeneity of language-games, each disposing of its own sui generis criteria. In which case we have no right to criticize Faurisson on terms laid down by traditional modes of scholarly enquiry or good faith historical research. For it is evident enough -- on Lyotard's submission -- that Faurisson simply doesn't accept those standards, and therefore that we do him a signal injustice by applying them to his statements about the Holocaust. More than that: we fall straight into Faurisson's trap by adopting a 'totalitarian' approach that takes for granted its own privileged status with regard to issues of truth, justice, and ethical accountability. For he can then justifiably retort that his opponents have made him the victim of a discourse that suppresses the narrative or speech-act differend, and which thus peremptorily denies his right to a free and fair hearing.

MPP5-708 LYOTARD'S VIEW OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT IS MISGUIDED

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM*, 1994, p.31.

Hence the massively distorted image of 'Enlightenment' reason put around by postmodernists, neo-pragmatists, and others, often (one suspects) on the basis of a slender acquaintance with the relevant texts and contexts. Nor does it require any great investment of scholarly labour to perceive how utterly wide of the mark is this bugbear characterization. One only need compare (say) Lyotard's prejudicial talk of enlightened 'meta-narratives', 'master-discourses', monopolistic capitalized Truth, and so forth with the account offered by a well-informed intellectual historian like Peter Gay." What then becomes clear -- no doubt to the surprise of readers bred up on the doxastic postmodern view -- is the sheer absurdity of equating 'Enlightenment' either with one historically delimited period of recent European thought or with a fixed set of doctrines laying claim to some ultimate (quasi-theological) truth. Even the most cursory reading of Gay's two volumes is sufficient to dispel the latter misconception. Never has there been a more fissile, internally fractured, and disputacious movement of thought than the enterprise launched by the French philosophes and raised to a higher point of critical reflection by Kant and subsequent thinkers. In fact this was not just a period trait but a defining characteristic of the Enlightenment project, committed as it was -- and as Kant most explicitly proclaimed -- to a principle of freedom in the questioning of received ideas and values.

MPP5-709 LYOTARD'S PAGANISM CAN'T GENERATE POLITICAL JUDGMENTS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.16-17.

But the politics born in paganism is not unproblematic. Lyotard tells us that the principle of paganism is heteronomy and multiplicity, and the difficulties with founding a politics on this principle are many. These difficulties include, but are not limited to, the following: how fragmented, decentered, and changing can a subject be and still retain the qualities necessary to a citizen or political subject (or we might ask, how fragmented, etc., can language be and still yield anything resembling a "subject" -- authorless or not?)? Or we could, as does Lyotard, phrase the question in terms of the problematic of judgment: paganism, is defined as judging without criteria. But the question is how this kind of model enables one to get beyond judgments of pleasure aesthetic judgments) to judgments of what is just or unjust (political judgments). These problems are even more pronounced when we move to the level of social (political) interaction. If there is no unifying thread holding together a single subject, much less will there be the unity commonly thought to be necessary for the formation of political communities or groups or coalitions, and if there is no standard by which to judge the justice of individual actions or to adjudicate between competing desires/interest/actions on an individual level, how much more problematic is judgment on the level of collective decision making.

MPP5-710 LYOTARD'S POLITICS ARE UNABLE TO PRODUCE CHANGE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.32.

Most worrisome of all, however, is the conservatism implicit in Lyotard's proffered paganism. Lyotard believes that a tolerance of difference will follow upon the admission of the sovereignty of language games: since each language game is sovereign, none has the right to intrude on another's territory. But this kind of doctrine does not necessarily give voice to difference (or give way to "greater sensitivity and tolerance") for at least two reasons. First, as critics of patriarchy know only too well, not all language games are equally empowered. Second, language games are not pacific, they usually, perhaps even necessarily, entail the intrusion into another's space, if for no other reason than that the social space is complex, it is made up of many intertwining language games. In a society where both are true Lyotard's theory does nothing to change, or even challenge, the status quo. Lyotard's theory must address the political realities, otherwise the domination of the more powerful language games and its repressive power structure will remain intact and the voices of dissent will continue to be stifled -- and hence, terror will continue to reign. This entails the claim that a merely formal notion of justice, one which does not take actual forms of oppression into account, must remain inadequate.

MPP5-711 LYOTARD FAILS TO ESCAPE THE TRADITIONAL POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.7

My exposition then will proceed as follows. I discuss Lyotard first because in my view he represents the least successful attempt at pluralist politics ("pluralist politics" is being used here to denote a politics which accommodates the demands of difference and so is a necessary component of oppositional politics). His "paganism" gives way to Kantianism because he remains stuck within the old framework. He sees his paganism as resulting in relativism and feels this relativism must be overcome because he retains an enlightenment conception of politics.

MPP5-712 LYOTARD'S IDEA OF JUSTICE IS AN EXPRESSION OF CULTURAL MALAISE

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.115.

I have written elsewhere - and at greater length - about the confusions linguistic, philosophical, and moral that induce Lyotard to equate 'justice' with the suspension of reasoned or principled argument in matters of historical truth. Nothing is more clearly indicative of the deep-laid cultural malaise that has taken hold with the turn against Enlightenment values and the consequent retreat into a postmodern rhetoric of difference, textuality, subject positions, incommensurable phrase-regimes, and so forth

MPP5-713 LYOTARD'S RELATIVISM IGNORES BLATANT INJUSTICE

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM, 1994, p.26.

Thus it is all very well for 'advanced' Western theorists to allow themselves this luxury of (in Lyotard's oxymoronic phrase) 'judging without criteria', or treating every case -- every language-game or form of life -- as equally requiring the principled suspension of our own judgmental norms. But it is a message unlikely to carry much weight with the victims of ethnic cleansing in erstwhile Yugoslavia, with women in the Islamic countries who stand to lose all their hard-won gains if the 'radical' clergy and the hard-line ideologues win out, or with those in the Western 'liberal democracies' who are witnessing the large-scale rollback of rights (often re-named 'benefits') which formed, until recently, the common ground of a broad-based political consensus. At any rate they cannot derive much comfort from an outlook -- whatever its impeccably pluralist credentials -- that refuses to judge in such matters, treating them rather as so many instances of the narrative-pragmatic 'differend' that always opens up between rival (heterogeneous) ideas of truth and justice.

MPP5-714 LYOTARD'S CONCEPT OF JUSTICE LACKS POLITICAL AND ETHICAL FORCE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.30-1.

So at least on the surface, Lyotard's doctrine is politically liberating to those of us who would promote a politics of difference. However, on closer examination Lyotard's pagan model of a multiplicity of justices is also troubling. For example, we might well ask what the political and ethical force of his concept of justice is. For one thing, such a conception refuses the legitimacy of metanarratives and as we have already discussed, this has dangerous consequences: if "good" is equivalent to whatever one adopts, then justice (as well as morality) becomes a matter of the dominance of the strongest voice. But this is an outcome with which Lyotard is uneasy, an uneasiness which, as we shall see, leads to his downfall, for it leads him to adopt a kind of old-style (and regressive) Kantianism.

MPP5-715 LYOTARD FAILS TO PROVIDE CRITERIA FOR JUSTICE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.34-5

Second, it raises the question of legitimation. Even if one respects the sovereignty of language games, the purity of genres, one must still discriminate between just and unjust prescriptions. As Thebaud notes, the "Idea of justice" which Lyotard introduces to guarantee the justice of multiplicities actually begs this more fundamental question: even if the Idea of justice is successful in its goal of keeping prescriptions, narration, description, etc., in their "proper" order, "once the games have been restored to their purity, one must still discriminate between just and unjust prescriptions" (JG 96). Lyotard agrees that this is a necessity, but as yet he has failed to provide the criteria for judgment.

MPP5-716 LYOTARD'S THEORY UNDERMINES JUSTICE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.42.

In Kant's formulation of the Categorical Imperative we remain autonomous because the moral law is a law we give ourselves. Lyotard does not fall into the trap of subscribing to the Kantian notion of autonomy, but ironically enough, in attempting to distance himself from Kant's position, in refusing to say where the law does come from, his thesis is even less acceptable than Kant's. Neutralizing the position of the sender takes away the point of questioning and would have us simply obey: "For us, a language is just and foremost someone talking. But there are language games in which the important thing is to listen, in which the rule deals with audition. Such a game is the game of the just. And in this game one speaks only inasmuch as one listens, that is, one speaks as a listener, not as an author." But such a position is unacceptable to a politics of difference; a politics which would have us be more sensitive to and tolerant of difference must allow for the discursive redeemability of prescriptions. In placing the Idea of Justice outside of the realm of the knowable, outside what can be critically questioned and examined, Lyotard makes justice a form of the unjust. In matters of justice listening is never enough.

MPP5-717 LYOTARD OVEREXTENDS HIS CONCEPT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Ronald Slye, Associate Director, Center for International Human Rights, Yale Law School, *FORDHAM INTERNATIONAL LAW JOURNAL*, 1995, p.1577.

Lyotard overextends this notion, however, by outrageously claiming that a child with whom others refuse to play in a playground suffers a wrong "equivalent, on its own scale, to a crime against humanity." While Lyotard does not explain the qualification "on its own scale," its breadth suggests that practically all wrongs are crimes against humanity. This is clearly a dangerous claim, because it threatens to trivialize the seriousness of crimes against humanity, diminishing those crimes until they appear everyday and almost benign when viewed against the backdrop of the horrors of the twentieth century.

MPP5-718 LYOTARD HAS NO EFFECTIVE MEANS OF EXPANDING HUMAN RIGHTS

Ronald Slye, Associate Director, Center for International Human Rights, Yale Law School, *FORDHAM INTERNATIONAL LAW JOURNAL*, 1995, p.1577.

While his theory is intriguing, Lyotard offers nothing to suggest that his concept of the individual will be persuasive to human rights violators or that they can be convinced of its truthfulness. It seems little more than a sophisticated version of "treat thy neighbor as you would have your neighbor treat you." The problem is that people in the United States do not regard Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina as their neighbors. In fact, as Rorty suggests, U.S. residents may even believe that Muslims are not human, and thus in Lyotard's terms, not possessing the faculty of interlocution.

MPP5-719 LYOTARD EXAGGERATES THE TERRORISTIC NATURE OF CONSENSUS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.38.

The problem with Lyotard's view, however, is that it assumes that consensus must necessarily be a mark of terror. But it could also be a mark of genuine agreement. Agreement need not be based on terror, and in fact the segregation Lyotard requires with the autonomy of language games might itself be seen as a mark of terror. The thesis of the autonomy (sovereignty) of language games does not allow us, for example, to consider the thesis of the ubiquity of power, viz., that power may in fact already impede on many spheres other than the one specific to the game of prescription. Power does not remain tied to a specific genre. This is the liberating insight of Foucault's work, and also indicates the need to be wary of the neat division of spheres -- as for example the public and the private; when critically examined, such separations often serve to mask the domination of power regimes.

MPP5-720 LYOTARD'S REJECTION OF STRUCTURE UNDERMINES POLITICS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.23.

But the heteronomous nature of language and the heterogeneous nature of linguistic rules means that there is no universal discourse underlying different language games, nor is there a single standard of rationality into which all discourses can be translated or from which all conflict could be measured. We have seen that this leads Lyotard to adopt a model of discourse (and of science and knowledge) based on paralogy -- on dissent rather than consensus. But even granted that we agree to the inadequacy of models that retain universals and transcendental signifiers, we might still wonder whether the principle of paralogy gives us a workable model for communal interaction. And if not, we might well question whether there is enough left of politics to serve as a meaningful -- or acceptable -- theory; can we have a politics that does not allow for structure?

MPP5-721 LYOTARD TOTALIZES DIFFERENCE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.44.

What I would add and insist on is that such movements cannot be formulated without the accommodation of some, though not the traditional, notion of consensus, community, or solidarity. These terms will have to be reconsidered -- in difference to the Enlightenment tradition and in deference to the Nietzschean/Derridian one -- as essentially unstable. Just as it is a mistake to universalize totality, so too is it a mistake to universalize difference. In their own ways, both Lyotard and Rorty fall into this trap. We have seen that Lyotard falls into it by becoming entrapped in the following false dichotomy: either relativistic pluralism or terroristic consensus. He universalizes difference with the consequence that he is unable to conceive of consensus and community as anything other than totalizing and hence terroristic.

MPP5-722 LYOTARD'S VIEW OF LANGUAGE GAMES RENDERS CRITICISM MOOT

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM*, 1994, p.12.

This may seem an odd charge to bring in view of Lyotard's pluralist rhetoric, his stress on the open multiplicity of language games, each disposing of its own immanent criteria and none having the right to adjudicate over any other. But the effect of this incommensurability-thesis -- derived from a mixture of post structuralist, Wittgensteinian and liberal-communitarian ideas -- is to render criticism pretty much otiose in the face of practices or beliefs (no matter how obnoxious) which subscribe to some different language-game or set of cultural norms.

MPP5-723 LYOTARD CAN'T AVOID PERFORMATIVE CONTRADICTION

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.31.

The most widely recognized (and by Lyotard as well) of the problems engendered by the pagan model of justice is that it traps him in performative contradictions because he is not able, and also not willing, to give up the urge for grand legitimation: he oversteps the self-imposed limits of sovereign language games by claiming that his pagan notion of the multiplicity of language games can (must) be legitimated by the justice of multiplicity. As Jean-Loup Thebaud, his interlocutor in *Just Gaming*, correctly notes, Lyotard can often be caught speaking like the "great prescriber himself" (JG 100). This problem is quite damaging, for in his attempt to legitimate his theory Lyotard allows idolatry (and Kant) in the back door, and in so doing gives up on his political commitment to difference.

MPP5-724 LYOTARD PARADOXICALLY RELIES ON A UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.33.

But in fact when it comes to matters of justice we do fudge with reference to criteria: the criteria of multiplicity. At one and the same time Lyotard wants to combine a radical commitment to otherness with a universalistic principle of constraint: paganism and the idea of justice as a multiplicity prescribe for all discourses that they respect the sovereignty of language games, and this involves Lyotard in a paradox, for he does what he insists cannot be done -- namely with the idea of the Justice of multiplicity he introduces a universal principle of constraint. Many critics of Lyotard note this problem. Among them is Geoff Bennington, who sees the tension between the view of justice as a totality and the pagan idea of justice, which stresses dispersion and heterogeneity as being unresolved and damning for his theory of justice.

MPP5-725 LYOTARD'S SEARCH FOR A UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE UNDERMINES HIS POLITICS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.35-6.

Thus, it turns out that the moral law Lyotard seeks is one that has within it the criteria of universal legislation, and this entails, as he is forced to admit, the return of the idea of unity and totality (JG 94-95). It is also importantly a reneging of his aesthetic ideal for the moral law demands conformity, even if it is conformity to the Idea of Multiplicity. But if this is the end result of his project, then we are forced to conclude that he fails in his attempt to offer a progressive political model, one which could be used to build a politics of difference. In his disavowal of aesthetic (pagan, postmodern) politics, and his insistence on the need for a regulatory ideal, he resurrects the idea of justice as the domination of one game over others: "... the justice of multiplicity ... is assured, paradoxically enough, by a prescriptive of universal value. It prescribes the observance of the singular justice of each game. ... It authorizes the "violence" that accompanies the work of the imagination. It prohibits terror ... [all emphasis mine]" (JG 100). And it does so under the auspices of Kant: "If we remain with opinion [that is, within the aesthetic realm of the pagan] what will be just is ultimately that upon which people agree. ... is just. It is common opinion. That is an extraordinarily dangerous position. If, on the contrary, we take a Kantian position, we have a regulator, that is a safekeeper of the pragmatics of obligation" (JG 76).

MPP5-726 LYOTARD'S APPEAL TO KANT UNDERMINES HIS POLITICS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.26.

The questions posed by Lyotard at the end of the long passage above, especially those which worry the question of just vs. unjust actions and how to adjudicate between them, begin to hint at his uneasiness with the "cavalier" stance of the pagan. Lyotard's solution is to offer the "Kantian Ideal" as being that which works to constrain or regulate pagan justice. However, I will argue that this solution results in the downfall of Lyotard's political theory. Paganism and the Kantian Ideal cannot be reconciled. Lyotard's revitalization of Kantianism is a betrayal of his postmodern ideals and therefore forces us to reject him as a serious proponent of a politics of difference.

MPP5-727 RORTY IS A POSTMODERN LIBERAL

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *DERRIDA*, 1987, p.153-4.

When Rorty calls himself a 'post-modern bourgeois liberal', it is precisely in order to distance his kind of 'liberalism' from the claims implicit in the Kantian sense of that word. No longer is it a question of adjudicating moral and political issues in light of those purportedly self-evident truths whose universality must yet be tested in the critical tribunal of autonomous individual conscience. 'Post-modern' liberalism conceives itself more on the American model, as a generalized consensus of ideas and interests that works to guarantee the flourishing and continuance of a certain communal self-image. The *quaestio quid juris* of Kantian ethics - or the questions of political justice raised by Kant's more revolutionary successors -- would be simply beside the point according to this 'post-modern' notion of how philosophy should properly serve the interests of society at large.

MPP5-728 THE SEARCH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS FOUNDATIONS IS USELESS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ON HUMAN RIGHTS*, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.116

On Rabossi's view, philosophers like Alan Gewirth are wrong to argue that human rights cannot depend on historical facts. "My basic point," Rabossi says, is that "the world has changed, that the human rights phenomenon renders human rights foundationalism outmoded and irrelevant." Rabossi's claim that human rights foundationalism is outmoded seems to me both true and important; it will be my principal topic in this lecture. I shall be enlarging on, and defending, Rabossi's claim that the question whether human beings really have the rights enumerated in the Helsinki Declaration is not worth raising. In particular, I shall be defending the claim that nothing relevant to moral choice separates human beings from animals except historically contingent facts of the world, cultural facts.

MPP5-729 RORTY SHARES NIETZSCHE'S PERSPECTIVISM

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.48

Like Nietzsche, Rorty revels in the doctrine of perspectivism. He valorizes the strong poet (Nietzsche's *Übermensch*) as one who is able to look perspectivism in the face and say "yes!" The strong poet is one who is able to create herself, to end her life knowing that the "final" vocabularies she has created are her own ("final vocabularies" are those sets of words which one chooses to use to justify one's actions and commitments, to formulate admiration and contempt, self-doubts and dreams)."

MPP5-730 THE COHERENCE OF OUR OWN BELIEFS IS THE MOST WE CAN EXPECT

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ON HUMAN RIGHTS*, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.116-17.

Traditionally, the name of the shared human attribute which supposedly "grounds" morality is "rationality." Cultural relativism is associated with irrationalism because it denies the existence of morally relevant transcultural facts. To agree with Rabossi one must, indeed, be irrationalist in that sense. But one need not be irrationalist in the sense of ceasing to make one's web of belief as coherent, and as perspicuously structured, as possible. Philosophers like myself, who think of rationality as simply the attempt at such coherence, agree with Rabossi that foundationalist projects are outmoded. We see our task as a matter of making our own culture -- the human rights culture -- more self-conscious and more powerful, rather than of demonstrating its superiority to other cultures by an appeal to something transcultural.

MPP5-731 PRAGMATISM REJECTS INTELLECTUAL FOUNDATIONS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.18-19.

One can only have such a hope if one thinks that, despite the fears of Husserl, Julien Benda, and contemporary communitarian critics of political liberalism, a democratic society can get along without the sort of reassurance provided by the thought that it has 'adequate philosophical foundations' or that it is 'grounded' in human reason'. On this view, the most appropriate foundation for a liberal democracy is a conviction by its citizens that things will go better for everybody if every new metaphor is given a hearing, if no belief or desire is held so sacred that a metaphor which endangers it is automatically rejected. Such a conviction amounts to the rejection of the claim that we, the democratic societies of the West, know what we want in advance -- that we have more than a tentative and revisable Grundriss for our social projects. One task of the intellectuals in these societies will be to help their fellow citizens live with the thought that we do not yet have an adequate language, and to wean them from the idea that there is something out there to be 'adequate' to. This amounts to suggesting that we try to eschew scientific pronouncements which take for granted that we now have a secure grasp on the nature of society, or of the good. It means admitting that the terms in which we state our communal convictions and hopes are doomed to obsolescence, that we shall always need new metaphors, new logical spaces, new jargons, that there will never be a final resting-place for thought, nor a social philosophy which is a strenge Wissenschaft.

MPP5-732 PRAGMATISM SEEKS HUMAN WELFARE, NOT ULTIMATE TRUTH

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.27.

A suitable interpretation of Heidegger's Claim requires defining Platonism as the claim that the point of inquiry is to get in touch with something like Being, or the Good, or Truth, or Reality -- something large and powerful which we have a duty to apprehend correctly. By contrast, pragmatism must be defined as the claim that the function of inquiry is, in Bacon's words, to "relieve and benefit the condition of man" -- to make us happier by enabling us to cope more successfully with the physical environment and with each other.

MPP5-733 PRAGMATISM EMBRACES SOCIAL AND DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION BUT STILL JUSTIFIES POLITICS

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.31.

I do not think that subsequent American leftists have made any advance on Dewey's understanding of the relation between the individual and society. Dewey was as convinced as Foucault that the subject is a social construction, that discursive practices go all the way down to the bottom of our minds and hearts. But he insisted that the only point of society is to construct subjects capable of ever more novel, ever richer, forms of human happiness. The vocabulary in which Dewey suggested we discuss our social problems and our political initiatives was part of his attempt to develop a discursive practice suitable for that project of social construction.

MPP5-734 FOR RORTY, THERE IS NO ONE CORRECT WAY OF ACTING

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.47-8.

The aesthetic which Rorty is committed to is a Nietzschean one that valorizes irony, play, and protean change. The self appropriate to such an aesthetic is a self conceived of as a centerless random collage of contingent and idiosyncratic needs (FMR 12). There is no single or correct description of the self. Neither is there a human essence uniting distinct individuals, or any one thing called justice, or rationality, or truth. There can be no "correct" way of acting, no "ought" determining hierarchical modes of existence.

MPP5-735 RORTY ACCEPTS THE MULTIPLICITY OF JUSTICE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.47.

Rorty's "poeticized culture," on the other hand, amounts to a simple acceptance of a multiplicity of justices and the sovereignty of the pragmatics of language games, and he accepts that such a view forecloses on the possibility of grounding such multiplicity in an Idea of justice. Rorty's notion of a poeticized culture, a culture whose history, customs, morality, and desires are a function of the fact that certain poets of the past spoke as they did (CC 13-14), appears to offer a radical pluralism which refuses, in a way Lyotard did not, the sense of the charge of relativism.

MPP5-736 RORTY ACCEPTS RELATIVISM

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.46-7.

Rorty, on the other hand, insists with Joseph Schumpeter that "[t]o realize the relative validity of one's convictions and yet stand for them unflinchingly, is what distinguishes a civilized man from a barbarian" (CIS 46). He categorically denies that neutrality is an option, but this does not worry him; neutrality is not a desideratum: ... neither Schumpeter's phrase "relative validity" nor the notion of a "relativist predicament" will seem in point if one grants Davidson's claim that new metaphors are causes, but not reasons for changes in belief, and Hesse's claim that it is new metaphors which have made intellectual progress possible. If one grants these claims, there is no such thing as the "relativist predicament," just as for someone who thinks that there is no God there will be no such thing as blasphemy. For there will be no higher standpoint to which we are responsible and against whose precepts we might offend.

MPP5-737 FOR RORTY, MORALITY IS ALWAYS SITUATIONAL

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.46.

For Rorty, morality is a language, which means that it is the result of accepting certain metaphors as useful. Our moral vocabulary is always open to redescription, and the description one chooses will depend upon one's particular purposes, purposes that can never be theory neutral. For Rorty, giving up such notions as relativism also entails giving up the ideas of neutrality, objectivity, and justification -- if by justification we mean to appeal to something other than contingent practices. There can be no presuppositionless critical reflection conducted outside of a particular linguistic and historical context. One always speaks from an interested standpoint. The question, therefore, "How do you know?", must be refused and replaced with questions like "Why do you talk that way?"

MPP5-738 FOR RORTY, PLURALISM RENDERS RELATIVISM MEANINGLESS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.46.

Rorty's claim that the truth is not "out there" might seem to lead him into the relativistic position he is claiming to abandon-but he refuses this charge. Radical pluralism, which in Rorty's case amounts to a belief in the "radical diversity of private" purposes, of the radically poetic character of individual lives, and of the merely poetic foundation of the 'we-consciousness' which lies behind our social institutions" (CIS 67-68), need not be a relativist position. The distinction between relativism and absolutism, rationality and irrationality, morality and expediency, is a remnant of vocabularies which the pluralist no longer finds useful. He would replace this vocabulary with one which uses the metaphor of self-creation (hence his valorization of the "strong poet"), and argues that this is better suited for the purposes of presenting and furthering democratic society.

MPP5-739 RORTY REJECTS THE CONCERN FOR RELATIVISM

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.45.

The simplest statement of Rorty's solution to the worry that radical pluralism ("paganism" in Lyotard's terms, "irony" in Rorty's) leads to relativism would claim that the worry over relativism makes sense only within the context of Modernist or Enlightenment vocabularies. Once these vocabularies are given up, the worry over relativism makes no sense, indeed, the question does not even arise. These are vocabularies that he, but not Lyotard, has abandoned. In his articles on the contingency of language, the self, and community. Rorty argues that radical pluralism will be seen to harbor vicious relativisms only so long as one retains the Enlightenment expectation of rationality and subjectivity and Modernist beliefs in things like human essences or grand legitimating narratives. Those of us who feel compelled to answer charges of relativism are implicitly accepting the notion that there are criteria to appeal to beyond the pragmatics of our situation or our particular game.

MPP5-740 PHILOSOPHY SHOULD GENERALIZE OUR MORAL INTUITIONS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.117.

We think that the most philosophy can hope to do is summarize our culturally influenced intuitions about the right thing to do in various situations. The summary is effected by formulating a generalization from which these intuitions can be deduced, with the help of noncontroversial lemmas. That generalization is not supposed to ground our intuitions, but rather to summarize them. John Rawls's "Difference Principle" and the U.S. Supreme Court's construction, in recent decades, of a constitutional "right to privacy" are examples of this kind of summary. We see the formulation of such summarizing generalizations as increasing the predictability, and thus the power and efficiency, of our institutions, thereby heightening the sense of shared moral identity which brings us together in a moral community.

MPP5-741 RATIONALITY DOESN'T DEFINE HUMAN MORAL STATUS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia,
ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds.,
1993, p.124.

Plato thought that the way to get people to be nicer to each other was to point out what they all had in common: rationality. But it does little good to point out, to the people I have just described, that many Muslims and women are good at mathematics or engineering or jurisprudence. Resentful young Nazi toughs were quite aware that many Jews were clever and learned, but this only added to the pleasure they took in beating them up. Nor does it do much good to get such people to read Kant, and agree that one should not treat rational agents simply as means. For everything turns on who counts as a fellow human being, as a rational agent in the only relevant sense -- the sense in which rational agency is synonymous with membership in our moral community.

MPP5-742 EDUCATION OF THE SENTIMENTS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN REASON

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia,
ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds.,
1993, p.122-3.

The best, and probably the only, argument for putting foundationalism behind us is the one I have already suggested: It would be more efficient to do so, because it would let us concentrate our energies on manipulating sentiments, on sentimental education. That sort of education sufficiently acquaints people of different kinds with one another so that they are less tempted to think of those different from themselves as only quasi-human. The goal of this manipulation of sentiment is to expand the reference of the terms "our kind of people" and "people like us."

MPP5-743 MORAL RATIONALISM INHIBITS MORAL PROGRESS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia,
ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds.,
1993, p.122.

To overcome this idea of a sui generis sense of moral obligation, it would help to stop answering the question "What makes us different from the other animals?" by saying "We can know, and they can merely feel." We should substitute "We can feel for each other to a much greater extent than they can." This substitution would let us disentangle Christ's suggestion that love matters more than knowledge from the neo-Platonic suggestion that knowledge of the truth will make us free. For as long as we think that there is an historic power which makes for righteousness -- a power called truth, or rationality -- we shall not be able to put foundationalism behind us.

MPP5-744 MORAL THEORIES DON'T USEFULLY ENHANCE HUMAN RIGHTS CULTURE

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia,
ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds.,
1993, p.118-19.

This pragmatist argument against the Platonist has the same form as an argument for cutting off payment to the priests who are performing purportedly war-winning sacrifices- an argument which says that all the real work of winning the war seems to be getting done by the generals and admirals, not to mention the foot soldiers. The argument does not say: Since there seem to be no gods, there is probably no need to support the priests. It says instead: Since there is apparently no need to support the priests, there probably are no gods. We pragmatists argue from the fact that the emergence of the human rights culture seems to owe nothing to increased moral knowledge, and everything to hearing sad and sentimental stories, to the conclusion that there is probably no knowledge of the sort Plato envisaged. We go on to argue: Since no useful work seems to be done by insisting on a purportedly ahistorical human nature, there probably is no such nature, or at least nothing in that nature that is relevant to our moral choices.

MPP5-745 UNIVERSALISM ISN'T MORE RATIONAL THAN TRIBALISM

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia,
ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds.,
1993, p.127-8.

But the bad people's beliefs are not more or less "irrational" than the belief that race, religion, gender, and sexual preference are all morally irrelevant- that these are all trumped by membership in the biological species. As used by moral philosophers like McGinn, the term "irrational behavior" means no more than "behavior of which we disapprove so strongly that our spade is turned when asked why we disapprove of it." It would be better to teach our students that these bad people are no less rational, no less clearheaded, no more prejudiced, than we good people who respect otherness. The bad people's problem is that they were not so lucky in the circumstances of their upbringing as we were. Instead of treating as irrational all those people out there who are trying to find and kill Salman Rushdie, we should treat them as deprived.

MPP5-746 KANTIAN AND UTILITARIAN ETHICS AREN'T EFFECTIVE

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ON HUMAN RIGHTS*, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.125.

To get whites to be nicer to Blacks, males to females, Serbs to Muslims, or straights to gays, to help our species link up into what Rabossi calls a "planetary community" dominated by a culture of human rights, it is of no use whatever to say, with Kant: Notice that what you have in common, your humanity, is more important than these trivial differences. For the people we are trying to convince will rejoin that they notice nothing of the sort. Such people are morally offended by the suggestion that they should treat someone who is not kin as if he were a brother, or a nigger as if he were white, or a queer as if he were normal, or an infidel as if she were a believer. They are offended by the suggestion that they treat people whom they do not think of as human as if they were human. When utilitarians tell them that all pleasures and pains felt by members of our biological species are equally relevant to moral deliberation, or when Kantians tell them that the ability to engage in such deliberation is sufficient for membership in the moral community, they are incredulous.

MPP5-747 KANT'S MORAL THEORY LACKS COMPELLING FOUNDATIONS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ON HUMAN RIGHTS*, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.124-5

Kant's account of the respect due to rational agents tells you that you should extend the respect you feel for people like yourself to all featherless bipeds. This is an excellent suggestion, a good formula for secularizing the Christian doctrine of the brotherhood of man. But it has never been backed up by an argument based on neutral premises, and it never will be. Outside the circle of post-Enlightenment European culture, the circle of relatively safe and secure people who have been manipulating each others' sentiments for two hundred years, most people are simply unable to understand why membership in a biological species is supposed to suffice for membership in a moral community. This is not because they are insufficiently rational. It is, typically, because they live in a world in which it would be just too risky -- indeed, would often be insanely dangerous -- to let one's sense of moral community stretch beyond one's family, clan, or tribe.

MPP5-748 KANTIAN MORAL RATIONALISM CAN NOW BE REJECTED

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ON HUMAN RIGHTS*, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.132.

Kant performed the sort of awkward balancing act required in transitional periods. His project mediated between a dying rationalist tradition and a vision of a new, democratic world, the world of what Rabossi calls "the human rights phenomenon." With the advent of this phenomenon, Kant's balancing act has become outmoded and irrelevant. We are now in a good position to put aside the last vestiges of the ideas that human beings are distinguished by the capacity to know rather than by the capacities for friendship and inter-marriage, distinguished by rigorous rationality rather than by flexible sentimentality. If we do so, we shall have dropped the idea that assured knowledge of a truth about what we have in common is a prerequisite for moral education, as well as the idea of a specifically moral motivation. If we do all these things, we shall see Kant's *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* as a placeholder for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* -- a concession to the expectations of an intellectual epoch in which the quest for quasi-scientific knowledge seemed the only possible response to religious exclusionism.

MPP5-749 HUMAN POSSIBILITIES, NOT HUMAN NATURE, SHOULD BE STRESSED

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ON HUMAN RIGHTS*, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.121-2.

In the two centuries since the French Revolution, we have learned that human beings are far more malleable than Plato or Kant had dreamed. The more we are impressed by this malleability, the less interested we become in questions about our ahistorical nature. The more we see a chance to recreate ourselves, the more we read Darwin not as offering one more theory about what we really are but as providing reasons why we need not ask what we really are. Nowadays, to say that we are clever animals is not to say something philosophical and pessimistic but something political and hopeful, namely: If we can work together, we can make ourselves into whatever we are clever and courageous enough to imagine ourselves becoming. This sets aside Kant's question "What is Man?" and substitutes the question "What sort of world can we prepare for our great-grandchildren?"

MPP5-750 PRAGMATISM AVOIDS SPECTATORIAL POLITICS

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.35-6

I said earlier that we now have, among many American students and teachers, a spectatorial, disgusted, mocking Left rather than a Left which dreams of achieving our country. This is not the only Left we have, but it is the most prominent and vocal one. Members of this Left find America unforgivable, as Baldwin did, and also unachievable, as he did not. This leads them to step back from their country and, as they say, "theorize" it. It leads them to do what Henry Adams did: to give cultural politics preference over real politics, and to mock the very idea that democratic institutions might once again be made to serve social justice. It leads them to prefer knowledge to hope. I see this preference as a turn away from secularism and pragmatism -- as an attempt to do precisely what Dewey and Whitman thought should not be done: namely, to see the American adventure within a fixed frame of reference, a frame supplied by theory. Paradoxically, the leftists who are most concerned not to "totalize," and who insist that everything be seen as the play of discursive differences rather than in the old metaphysics-of-presence way, are also the most eager to theorize, to become spectators rather than agents." But that is helping yourself with one hand to what you push away with the other. The further you get from Greek metaphysics, Dewey urged, the less anxious you should be to find a frame within which to fit an ongoing historical process.

MPP5-751 PRAGMATISM SEEKS THE FULFILLMENT OF HUMAN POTENTIALITY

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.18.

So the crucial difference between the Heideggerian and the pragmatist attitude towards the philosophical tradition stems from a difference in attitude towards recent political history. The basic motive of pragmatism, like that of Hegelianism, was, I have argued elsewhere, a continuation of the Romantic reaction to the Enlightenment's sanctification of natural science. Once scientific rhetoric (which persists in both Hegel and Dewey, and obscures their more basic Romanticism) is cleared away, both Hegelianism and pragmatism can be seen as attempts to clear the ground for the kind of society which the French Revolution hoped to build: one in which every human potentiality is given a fair chance.

MPP5-752 PRAGMATISM, UNLIKE HEIDEGGER, SEEKS TO MAXIMIZE HUMAN HAPPINESS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.21.

In what precedes I have sketched what I take to be the central metaphilosophical disagreements of recent times. On my account, there are two basic lines of division: one between the scientism common to Husserl and positivism, and the other between two reactions to this scientism. The first reaction -- Heidegger's is dictated by a tacit and unarguable rejection of the project of the French Revolution, and of the idea that everything, including philosophy, is in instrument for the achievement of the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The second -- Dewey's -- is dictated by an equally tacit and unarguable acceptance of that project and that idea.

MPP5-753 PRAGMATISM SEES SOCIAL FREEDOM AS THE FUNCTION OF PHILOSOPHY

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.18.

The pragmatist and Heidegger can agree that the poet and the thinker (in Heidegger's special elitist's senses of these terms) are the unacknowledged legislators of the social world. But whereas Heidegger thinks of the social world as existing for the sake of the poet and the thinker, the pragmatist thinks of it the other way round. For Dewey as for Hegel, the point of individual human greatness is its contribution to social freedom, where this is conceived of in the terms we inherit from the French Revolution.

MPP5-754 PRAGMATISM SUPPORTS CULTURAL PLURALISM

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.132-3.

One reason we pragmatists have this preference is that we see the sort of cultural pluralism which rejects metaphors of centrality and depth as chiming with democratic politics -- with the spirit of tolerance which has made constitutional democracies possible. We see this tolerance as saying that public policy and public institutions must be neutral on questions of what is central to human life, questions about the goal or point of human existence. Contemporary democratic societies are built around the assumption that we have to develop institutions which are suitable for people who have wildly different ideas on such topics - for example, worshippers of God, of science, of literature, and of nothing in particular.

MPP5-754 RORTY'S POSTMODERN NEO-PRAGMATISM SUPPORTS HUMAN RIGHTS

Ronald Slye, Associate Director, Center for International Human Rights, Yale Law School, *FORDHAM INTERNATIONAL LAW JOURNAL*, 1995, p.1574-5.

Rawls provides us with an ideal type of international society for the protection of human rights, relies implicitly upon reason to establish its validity, and explicitly approves moral, economic, and military pressure to preserve and enforce it. Richard Rorty, in contrast, explicitly rejects such a rationality-based approach to establishing and strengthening universal human rights. He is not concerned with constructing from first principles, liberal or otherwise, an ideal society where human rights are honored. Instead, he identifies the rise of a human rights culture in the twentieth century and asks how it can be strengthened and supported. Rorty does not identify specific rights that are included in this human rights culture, other than to refer to moral goodness. His essay addresses those who already identify with the human rights culture and asks how that culture can be expanded and strengthened. The answer is not by showing that it is superior to others, although we may believe that this is true, but by making our culture more self-conscious and powerful. Rorty's endeavor is not fundamentally different from that of Rawls and Lukes. All three essayists identify a universal notion of human rights which they argue should be adopted globally. They differ, however, in the strategies they suggest for expanding their respective visions of basic human rights. Rorty identifies sentimentality and the manipulation of feelings as the best means to strengthen the human rights culture, whereas Lukes and Rawls combine rational arguments with, in certain limited cases, force and coercion to expand their human rights regimes.

MPP5-755 EDUCATION CAN OVERCOME THE GAP BETWEEN "US" AND THE "OTHER"

Ronald Slye, Associate Director, Center for International Human Rights, Yale Law School, *FORDHAM INTERNATIONAL LAW JOURNAL*, 1995, p.1575.

On the one hand, Rorty's approach is quite liberating. Instead of delving into the question of what is the nature of human beings and human society, and then developing a system of human rights and justice out of that nature, Rorty asks what call we as human beings make of ourselves. History demonstrates that human nature is malleable, not fixed, and thus is amenable to change. In this, Rorty includes Serbians who are ethnically cleansing Bosnia-Herzegovina, men who violate women, and white supremacists who terrorize and murder people of color. This raises the question of how to prevent such atrocities, now and in the future. One cause of human rights violations throughout history has been a dehumanization of "the other." This process permits people to claim that they are proponents of goodness and justice, while still engaging in torture, murder, and rape. When victims are not viewed as part of the human community, their entitlement to human rights protection can be denied. Rorty suggests that sentimental education be used to show human rights violators that "the other" being violated is like the "us" committing the violation. In other words, we need to manipulate the sentiments and feelings of the Serbs so that they recognize that Muslims are human like themselves. The tool for liberation and justice is effective storytelling.

MPP5-756 THE STORIES OF THE OPPRESSED CAN PROVIDE A BASIS FOR EXPANDING HUMAN RIGHTS

Ronald Slye, Associate Director, Center for International Human Rights, Yale Law School, *FORDHAM INTERNATIONAL LAW JOURNAL*, 1995, p.1576.

Rorty recognizes that strengthening the human rights culture depends upon the decision of the powerful to stop oppressing the powerless. This is disheartening because it means that liberation depends upon the oppressors, not the oppressed. Rorty accepts that this is a deficiency in his recommended approach, but nevertheless believes that it is the correct path to take. Accepting sentimental education and its power to influence oppressors, however, does not eliminate the power of the oppressed. For the struggles of the oppressed provide the sentimental stories upon which Rorty relies. Thus, consistent with Rorty's prescription, the oppressed and their stories can be identified as the primary vehicle for change.

MPP5-757 RORTY DENIES THE POSSIBILITY OF PHILOSOPHICALLY GROUNDING HUMAN RIGHTS

Michael Freeman, Department of Government, University of Essex, *HUMAN RIGHTS QUARTERLY*, 1994, p.495.

Therefore, practical problems may rest on theoretical difficulties, and these difficulties may be rooted in fundamental philosophical differences. The temptation is to develop a division of labor among human rights workers and invite philosophers to elucidate "the philosophical foundations" of human rights. Some philosophers deny, however, the possibility of there being such foundations. Rorty, for example, has argued that the quest for secure philosophical foundations of human rights practice, found above all in the Kantian tradition, is philosophically doomed to fail and is practically useless. To avoid the charge of moral imperialism, human rights advocates must vindicate the philosophical correctness of their position. To this end, human rights advocates may seek to excavate the foundations of their beliefs, but the philosophical foundations they long for may be chimerical.

MPP5-758 PROGRESS RELIES ON INSPIRING HISTORICAL NARRATIVES

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.3-4.

Those who hope to persuade a nation to exert itself need to remind their country of what it can take pride in as well as what it should be ashamed of. They must tell inspiring stories about episodes and figures in the nation's past -- episodes and figures to which the country should remain true. Nations rely on artists and intellectuals to create images of, and to tell stories about, the national past. Competition for political leadership is in part a competition between differing stories about a nation's self-identity, and between differing symbols of its greatness.

MPP5-759 RORTY SEES INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AS SOCIALLY USEFUL

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.51.

Rorty claims that there are "fairly tight connections between the freedom of the intellectuals on the one hand, and the diminution of cruelty on the other" (CC 14). To understand this we must recall his thesis that the human self is created by the use of vocabularies and that truths or criteria or facts are a property of language: "only descriptions of the world can be true or false" (CIS 5). This leads him to adopt a version of perspectivism: "anything could be made to look good or bad, important or unimportant, useful or useless, by being redescribed"; all is a matter of perspective. But then imagination becomes the all-important social too], especially an imagination which is able to put into words what hasn't been put into words before, or which is unconstrained by the boundaries of the everyday. Such an imagination is the sole property of the strong poet, others are simply not raised to play the language game of critical reflection, and according to Rorty this makes the strong poet or ironist the most valuable social, cultural, and political commodity of liberal society.

MPP5-760 PRAGMATIC HUMANISM ISN'T A FORM OF POWER MANIA

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS, 1991, p.48.

That combination was just what Dewey wanted to achieve. He wanted to combine the vision of a social democratic utopia with the knowledge that only a lot of hard work and blind luck, unaided by any large nonhuman power called Reason or History, could bring that utopia into existence. He combines reminders that only attention to the daily detail, to the obstinacy of particular circumstance, can create a utopia with reminders that all things are possible, that there are no a priori or destined limits to our imagination or our achievement. His "humanism" was not the power mania which Heidegger thought to be the only remaining possibility open to the West. On the contrary, it put power in the service of love -- technocratic manipulation in the service of a Whitmanesque sense that our democratic community is held together by nothing less fragile than social hope.

MPP5-761 REJECTING HUMANISM IS A FAILURE OF NERVE

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY, 1998, p.37-8.

This distrust of humanism, with its retreat from practice to theory, is the sort of failure of nerve which leads people to abandon secularism for a belief in sin, and in Delbanco's "fixed standard by which deviance from the truth can be measured and denounced." It leads them to look for a frame of reference outside the process of experimentation and decision that is an individual or a national life. Grand theories -- eschatologies like Hegel's or Marx's, inverted eschatologies like Heidegger's, and rationalizations of hopelessness like Foucault's and Lacan's -- satisfy the urges that theology used to satisfy. These are urges which Dewey hoped Americans might cease to feel. Dewey wanted Americans to share a civic religion that substituted utopian striving for claims to theological knowledge.

MPP5-762 ONLY PIECEMEAL REFORM CAN WORK

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY, 1998, p.109.

The cultural Left has a vision of an America in which the white patriarchy has stopped voting and have left all the voting to be done by members of previously victimized groups, people who have somehow come into possession of more foresight and imagination than the selfish suburbanites. These formerly oppressed and newly powerful people are expected to be as angelic as the straight white males were diabolical. If I shared this expectation, I too would want to live under this new dispensation. Since I see no reason to share it, I think that the Left should get back into the business of piecemeal reform within the framework of a market economy. This was the business the American Left was in during the first two-thirds of the century. Someday, perhaps, cumulative piecemeal reforms will be found to have brought about revolutionary change.

MPP5-763 REFORMISM IS THE BEST HOPE FOR THE AMERICAN LEFT

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY, 1998, p.55-6.

Those who admire the revolutionary turn which the New Left took in the late Sixties have offered us their own accounts of the history of the American Left. Much of the tone and emphasis of these accounts comes from the writings of C. Wright Mills and Christopher Lasch. I think the description of mid century America which these two men helped put in circulation needs to be replaced. It should be replaced with a story which gives the reformers their due, and thereby leaves more room for national pride and national hope. Emphasizing the continuity between Herbert Croly and Lyndon Johnson, between John Dewey and Martin Luther King, between Eugene Debs and Walter Reuther, would help us to recall a reformist Left which deserves not only respect but imitation-the best model available for the American Left in the coming century. If the intellectuals and the unions could ever get back together again, and could reconstitute the kind of Left which existed in the Forties and Fifties, the first decade of the twenty-first century might conceivably be a Second Progressive Era.

MPP5-764 TOP DOWN REFORM IS POSSIBLE

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.52-3.

Those dispossessed farmers were often racist, nativist, and sadistic. The millionaire socialists, ruthless robber barons though they were, nevertheless set up the foundations which sponsored the research which helped get leftist legislation passed. We need to get rid of the Marxist idea that only bottom-up initiatives, conducted by workers and peasants who have somehow been so freed from resentment as to show no trace of prejudice, can achieve our country. The history of leftist politics in America is a story of how top-down initiatives and bottom-up initiatives have interlocked. Top-down leftist initiatives come from people who have enough security, money, and power themselves, but nevertheless worry about the fate of people who have less. Examples of such initiatives are muckraking exposes by journalists, novelists, and scholars -- for example, Ida Tarbell on Standard Oil, Upton Sinclair on immigrant workers in the Chicago slaughterhouses, Noam Chomsky on the State Department's lies and the New York Times's omissions. Other examples are the Wagner and Norris-Laguardias Acts, novels of social protest like *People of the Abyss* and *Studs Lonigan*, the closing of university campuses after the American invasion of Cambodia, and the Supreme Court's decisions in *Brown v. Board of Education* and *Romer v. Evans*.

MPP5-765 PRAGMATISM JUSTIFIES PROBLEM SOLVING AS ESSENTIAL TO PROGRESS

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.28.

The culminating achievement of Dewey's philosophy was to treat evaluative terms such as "true" and "right" not as signifying a relation to some antecedently existing thing -- such as God's Will, or Moral Law, or the Intrinsic Nature of Objective Reality -- but as expressions of satisfaction at having found a solution to a problem: a problem which may someday seem obsolete, and a satisfaction which may someday seem misplaced. The effect of this treatment is to change our account of progress. Instead of seeing progress as a matter of getting closer to something specifiable in advance, we see it as a matter of solving more problems. Progress is, as Thomas Kuhn suggested, measured by the extent to which we have made ourselves better than we were in the past rather than by our increased proximity to a goal.

MPP5-766 ALL INQUIRY SHOULD AIM AT PRACTICAL PROBLEM SOLVING

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ON HUMAN RIGHTS*, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.119.

Further, such metaethical questions presuppose the Platonic distinction between inquiry which aims at efficient problem-solving and inquiry which aims at a goal called "truth for its own sake." That, distinction collapses if one follows Dewey in thinking of an inquiry -- in physics as well as in ethics -- as practical problem-solving, or if one follows Peirce in seeing every belief as action-guiding.

MPP5-767 DEMOCRACY HAS BEEN MORALLY PROGRESSIVE

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ON HUMAN RIGHTS*, Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., 1993, p.121

The best explanation of both Darwin's relatively easy triumph, and our own increasing willingness to substitute hope for knowledge, is that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw, among the Europeans and Americans, an extraordinary increase in wealth, literacy, and leisure. This increase made possible an unprecedented acceleration in the rate of moral progress. Such events as the French Revolution and the ending of the trans-Atlantic slave trade prompted nineteenth-century intellectuals in the rich democracies to say: It is enough for us to know that we live in an age in which human beings can make things much better for ourselves. We do not need to dig behind this historical fact to nonhistorical facts about what we really are.

MPP5-768 PRAGMATISM ASSUMES THE VALUE OF DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.20.

But for Dewey, "progress, the happiness of the greatest number, culture, civilization" do not belong on the same list as "the suprasensory world, the Ideas, God, the moral law, the authority of reason." The latter are dead metaphors which pragmatists can no longer find uses for. The former still have a point. The pragmatist does not claim to have an argument against the latter items and for the former items. He is not scientific enough to think that there is some neutral philosophical standpoint which would supply premises for such an argument. He simply takes his stand within the democratic community and asks what an understanding of the thinkers of the past and of the present can do for such a community.

MPP5-769 TECHNOLOGICAL RATIONALITY CAN BE SUBORDINATED TO DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.20.

Heidegger thinks that a non-reductive, non-anachronistic hearing of the word of these thinkers might put us in a position to appreciate where we now are (where, as Heidegger would say, Being now is). The pragmatist agrees, but hears them differently. He hears them as the young Hegel did -- as urging us in the direction of greater human freedom, rather than in the direction of technological frenzy, of an age in which "human creativity finally passes over into business enterprise." He agrees with both Husserl and Heidegger (and with Horkheimer and Adorno) that the age of scientific technology may turn out to be the age in which openness and freedom are rationalized out of existence. But his reply is that it might turn out to be the age in which the democratic community becomes the mistress, rather than the servant, of technical rationality.

MPP5-770 THE TECHNOLOGICAL WORLD IS CAPABLE OF IMPROVEMENT

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.24.

Habermas is (despite what are, to my mind, unfortunate residues of scientism in his thought) the contemporary philosopher who most resembles Dewey -- not only in doctrine but in his attitude toward his society, and in the role which he has played in the day-to-day, nitty-gritty political debates of his time. Like Dewey, Habermas's thought is dominated by the question "What sort of philosophical vocabulary and approach would serve human freedom best?" and by the conviction that the modern industrialized technological world is not hopeless, but, on the contrary, capable of continual self-improvement.

MPP5-771 RADICAL CRITIQUE IS UNNEEDED -- WE NEED TO DEAL PRAGMATICALLY WITH SUFFERING

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.25.

The Deweyan is ruefully willing to admit that there are always going to be more varieties of suffering and oppression to be exposed (e.g., those endured by women as a class). He sees philosophy's role in exposing them as continuous with that of literature and of the social sciences. But he thinks contemporary democratic societies are already organized around the need for continual exposure of suffering and injustice, and that no 'radical critique' is required, but just attention to detail. So he thinks of the philosopher not as exposing the false or corrupt foundations of this society but as playing off the good and the bad features of this society against each other.

MPP5-772 THE IDEA OF RADICAL CRITIQUE IS AHISTORICAL AND SCIENTISTIC

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.25.

To my mind, the persistence on the left of this notion of 'radical critique' is an unfortunate residue of the scientistic conception of philosophy. Neither the idea of penetrating to a reality behind the appearances, nor that of theoretical foundations for politics, coheres with the conception of language and inquiry which, I have been arguing, is common to Heidegger and to Dewey. For both ideas presuppose that someday we shall penetrate to the true, natural, ahistorical matrix of all possible language and knowledge. Marx, for all his insistence on the priority of praxis, clung to both ideas, and they became dominant within Marxism after Lenin and Stalin turned Marxism into a state religion. But there is no reason why either should be adopted by those who are not obliged to practice this religion.

MPP5-773 RADICAL PHILOSOPHY DOESN'T ILLUMINATE OUR POLITICAL PROBLEMS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.26.

The vocabulary of social democratic politics -- the vocabulary which Dewey and Weber helped cobble together -- probably does not require further sophistication by philosophers (though economists and sociologists and historians have done some useful updating). There are no facts about economic oppression or class struggle, or modern technology, which that vocabulary cannot describe and a more 'radical' metaphoric can. The horrors peculiar to the end of our century -- imminent nuclear holocaust, the permanent drug-riddled black underclass in the U.S., the impossibility of feeding countries like Haiti and Chad except by massive charity which the rich nations are too selfish to provide, the unbreakable grip of the rich or the military on the governments of most of the Third World, the unbreakable grip of the KGB on the Russian people and of the Soviet army on a third of Europe -- are no better describable with the help of more recent philosophical vocabulary than with the vocabulary used by our grandfathers. Nobody has come up with any proposal for ending any of these horrors which draws on new conceptual resources. Our political imagination has not been enlarged by the philosophy of our century. This is not because of the irrelevance or cowardice or irresponsibility of philosophy professors, but because of the sheer recalcitrance of the situation into which the human race has stumbled.

MPP5-774 IDEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE ISN'T CENTRAL TO REFORM

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.135.

We pragmatists view the "critique of ideology" as an occasionally useful tactical weapon in social struggles, but as one among many others. We see no evidence to confirm de Man's claim that those familiar with "the linguistics of literariness" are likely to be more useful than, say, statisticians or muckraking journalists. Suggesting that this sort of linguistics is somehow central or essential to political thought seems to us like suggesting that, say, antisubmarine mines are central or essential to modern warfare.

MPP5-775 RADICAL CRITIQUE NEED NOT UNDERMINE LIBERALISM

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.96.

I have argued in various books that the philosophers most often cited by cultural leftists -- Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, and Derrida -- are largely right in their criticisms of Enlightenment rationalism. I have argued further that traditional liberalism and traditional humanism are entirely compatible with such criticisms. We can still be oldfashioned reformist liberals even if, like Dewey, we give up the correspondence theory of truth and start treating moral and scientific beliefs as tools for achieving greater human happiness, rather than as representations of the intrinsic nature of reality. We can be this kind of liberal even after we turn our backs on Descartes, linguistify subjectivity, and see everything around us and within us as one more replaceable social construction.

MPP5-776 "DISRUPTIVE" THEORIZING IS POLITICALLY IMPOTENT

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.93.

When one of today's academic leftists says that some topic has been "inadequately theorized," you can be pretty certain that he or she is going to drag in either philosophy of language, or Lacanian psychoanalysis, or some neo-Marxist version of economic determinism. Theorists of the Left think that dissolving political agents into plays of differential subjectivity, or political initiatives into pursuits of Lacan's impossible object of desire, helps to subvert the established order. Such subversion, they say, is accomplished by "problematizing familiar concepts." Recent attempts to subvert social institutions by problematizing concepts have produced a few very good books. They have also produced many thousands of books which represent scholastic philosophizing at its worst. The authors of these purportedly "subversive" books honestly believe that they are serving human liberty. But it is almost impossible to clamber back down from their books to a level of abstraction on which one might discuss the merits of a law, a treaty, a candidate, or a political strategy. Even though what these authors "theorize" is often something very concrete and near at hand -- a current TV show, a media celebrity, a recent scandal -- they offer the most abstract and barren explanations imaginable.

MPP5-777 METAPHYSICAL IDEAS DON'T REALLY MATTER

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.146.

Nonintellectuals' conviction that what the intellectuals talk about does not really matter was greatly strengthened when the new Enlightenment intellectuals informed them that the previous batch of intellectuals -- the priests -- had been completely wrong. One consequence of the mechanization of nature, and of the resulting popularity of a pragmatic, Baconian attitude toward knowledge-claims, was a heightened cynicism and indifference about the questions that intellectuals discuss. This is why metaphysical issues about "the nature of reality" and "the true self" have less resonance and popular appeal than religious heresies once did, and why philosophical questions raised within Comte's "positive," postmetaphysical perspective have even less. People always thought the priests a bit funny, but also a bit awe-inspiring. They thought German idealists, and Anglo-Saxon positivists, merely funny.

MPP5-778 WE SHOULD DEBATE POLITICS, NOT ABSTRACT PHILOSOPHY

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.25-6.

The moral I wish to draw from the story I have been telling is that we should carry through on the rejection of metaphilosophical scientism. That is, we should let the debate between those who see contemporary democratic societies as hopeless, and those who see them as our only hope, be conducted in terms of the actual problems now being faced by those societies. If I am right in thinking that the difference between Heidegger's and Dewey's ways of rejecting scientism is political rather than methodological or metaphysical, then it would be well for us to debate political topics explicitly, rather than using Aesopian philosophical language. If we did, then I think that we would realize how little theoretical reflection is likely to help us with our current problems. For once we have criticized all the self-deceptive sophistry, and exposed all the 'false consciousness', the result of our efforts is to find ourselves just where our grandfathers suspected we were: in the midst of a struggle for power between those who currently possess it (in our day: the oilmen of Texas or Qatar or Mexico, the nomenclatura of Moscow or Bucharest, the generals of Indonesia or Chile) and those who are starving or terrorized because they lack it. Neither twentieth-century Marxism, nor analytical philosophy, nor post-Nietzschean 'continental' philosophy has done anything to clarify this struggle. We have not developed any conceptual instruments with which to operate politically that are superior to those available at the turn of the century to Dewey or Weber.

MPP5-779 PHILOSOPHY ISN'T KEY TO POLITICS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.135.

Having granted all these points, however, we pragmatists still want to insist that what de Man says in the passages I have cited is absurd. It is just not the case that one has to have a Saussurian-Wittgensteinian-Derridean understanding of the nature of language in order to think clearly and usefully about politics. One does not have to be an anti-essentialist in philosophy in order to be politically imaginative or politically useful. Philosophy is not that important for politics, nor is literature. Lots of people who accept theocentric or Kantian logocentric accounts of moral obligation unconsciously and uncritically -- starting with Kant himself -- have done very well at political thinking. They have been invaluable to social reform and progress. The same can be said of lots of essentialists -- for example, all those people who still think that either natural or social science can change our self-image for the better by telling us what we really, essentially, intrinsically, are.

MPP5-780 PHILOSOPHY ISN'T KEY TO POLITICS

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.97.

Whitman and Dewey, I have argued, gave us all the romance, and all the spiritual uplift, we Americans need to go about our public business. As Edmundson remarks, we should not allow Emerson, who was a precursor of both Whitman and Dewey, to be displaced by Poe, who was a precursor of Lacan. For purposes of thinking about how to achieve our country, we do not need to worry about the correspondence theory of truth, the grounds of normativity, the impossibility of justice, or the infinite distance which separates us from the other. For those purposes, we can give both religion and philosophy a pass. We can just get on with trying to solve what Dewey called "the problems of men."

MPP5-781 HIGH LEVEL ABSTRACTION DISTORTS ANALYSIS

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.92-3.

In support of my first suggestion, let me cite a passage from Dewey's *Reconstruction in Philosophy* in which he expresses his exasperation with the sort of sterile debate now going on under the rubric of "individualism versus communitarianism." Dewey thought that all discussions which took this dichotomy seriously suffer from a common defect. They are all committed to the logic of general notions under which specific situations are to be brought. What we want is light upon this or that group of individuals, this or that concrete human being, this or that special institution or social arrangement. For such a logic of inquiry, the traditionally accepted logic substitutes discussion of the meaning of concepts and their dialectical relationships with one another. Dewey was right to be exasperated by sociopolitical theory conducted at this level of abstraction. He was wrong when he went on to say that ascending to this level is typically a rightist maneuver, one which supplies "the apparatus for intellectual justifications of the established order." For such ascents are now more common on the Left than on the Right. The contemporary academic Left seems to think that the higher your level of abstraction, the more subversive of the established order you can be. The more sweeping and novel your conceptual apparatus, the more radical your critique.

MPP5-782 DISCURSIVE ANALYSIS ISN'T KEY TO SOCIAL WELFARE

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.135.

Even though we pragmatists commend our anti-essentialism and anti-logocentrism on the ground of its harmony with the practices and aims of a democratic society, we do not want to claim that accepting and applying such doctrines is necessary for overcoming social and economic repression. After all, a lot of such repression is so blatant and obvious that it does not take any great analytic skills or any great philosophical self-consciousness to see what is going on. It does not, for example, take any "critical-linguistic analysis" to notice that millions of children in American ghettos grew up without hope while the U.S. government was preoccupied with making the rich richer -- with assuring a greedy and selfish middle class that it was the salt of the earth.

MPP5-783 POSTMODERNISM ISN'T A USEFUL CONCEPT
Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia,
ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS, 1991, p.1.

Heidegger and Derrida are often referred to as "postmodern" philosophers, I have sometimes used "postmodern" myself, in the rather narrow sense defined by Lyotard as "distrust of metanarratives." But I now wish that I had not. The term has been so over-used that it is causing more trouble than it is worth. I have given up on the attempt to find something common to Michael Graves's buildings, Pynchon's and Rushdie's novels, Ashberry's poems, various sorts of popular music, and the writings of Heidegger and Derrida. I have become more hesitant about attempts to periodize culture -- to describe every part of a culture as suddenly swerving off in the same new direction at approximately the same time. Dramatic narratives may well be, as MacIntyre has suggested, essential to the writing of intellectual history. But it seems safer and more useful to periodize and dramatize each discipline or genre separately, rather than trying to think of them all as swept up together in massive sea changes.

MPP5-784 LYOTARD DEVALUES CONSENSUS AND COMMUNICATION

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia,
ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS, 1991, p.175.

Lyotard unfortunately retains one of the Left's silliest ideas -- that escaping from such institutions is automatically a good thing, because it insures that one will not be "used" by the evil forces which have "co-opted" these institutions. Leftism of this sort necessarily devalues consensus and communication, for insofar as the intellectual remains able to talk to people outside the avant-garde she "compromises" herself.

MPP5-785 HEIDEGGER IGNORED THE VITAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND TOTALITARIANISM

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia,
ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS, 1991, p.19.

It will be apparent that, in formulating the pragmatist view in this way, I am trying to turn such Heideggerian notions as 'clearing', 'opening', 'authenticity' and 'historical being-there' to un-Heideggerian purposes. I want to yoke them to political movements which Heidegger himself distrusted. For him, the political life of both the liberal democracies and the totalitarian states was a piece with that 'technological frenzy' which seemed to him the essence of the modern age. The difference between the two did not really matter. By contrast, I want to suggest that we see the democracy-versus-totalitarianism issue as as basic as an intellectual issue can get.

MPP5-786 HEIDEGGER'S PERSPECTIVE IS POLITICALLY STERILE

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia,
ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS, 1991, p.24.

When it comes to attempts to make non-analytic philosophy continuous with politics, however, things become more complex and problematic. For nonanalytic philosophy is, with some exceptions, dominated by a Heideggerian vision of the modern world rather than a Deweyan one, and by despair over the condition of the world rather than by social hope. Because the typical member of this tradition is obsessed with the idea of 'radical criticism', when he or she turns to politics it is rarely in a reformist, pragmatic spirit, but rather in a mood either of deep pessimism or of revolutionary fury. Except for a few writers such as Habermas, 'continental' philosophers see no relation between social democratic politics and philosophizing." So the only sort of politics with which this tradition is continuous is not the actual political discourse of the surviving democratic nations, but a kind of pseudo-politics reminiscent of Marxist study-groups of the thirties -- a sort of continual self-correction of theory, with no conceivable relation to practice.

MPP5-787 HEIDEGGER IGNORED CONCRETE SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia,
ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS, 1991, p.19.

Although Heidegger's philosophy seems to me not to have specifically totalitarian implications, it does take for granted that attempts to feed the hungry, shorten the working day, etc., just do not have much to do with philosophy. For Heidegger, Christianity is merely a certain decadent form of Platonic metaphysics; the change from pagan to Christian moral consciousness goes unnoticed. The 'social gospel' side of Christianity which meant most to Tillich (a social democratic thinker who was nevertheless able to appropriate a lot of Heideggerian ideas and jargon) meant nothing to Heidegger.

MPP5-788 HEIDEGGER NEGLECTS PRACTICAL HUMAN PROBLEMS

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia,
ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS, 1991, p.40-1.

One should be clear that for Heidegger things like the danger of a nuclear holocaust, mass starvation because of overpopulation, and the like, are not indications that the time is particularly dark and dangerous. These merely ontic matters are not the sort of thing Heidegger has in mind when he says that "the wasteland spreads."

MPP5-789 HEIDEGGER WAS INDIFFERENT TO HUMAN SUFFERING

Richard Rorty, Professor of Philosophy, University of Virginia, *ESSAYS ON HEIDEGGER AND OTHERS*, 1991, p.72.

Only he can see the point of Heidegger's disdainful remark that the greatest disaster -- the spread of the wasteland, understood as the forgetfulness of Being -- may "easily go hand in hand with a guaranteed living standard for all men, and with a uniform state of happiness for all men." Ascetic priests have no patience with people who think that mere happiness or mere decrease of suffering might compensate for *Seinsvergetsenheit*, forgetfulness of Being.

MPP5-790 FOUCAULT'S POLITICS REINFORCE THE STATUS QUO

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.139.

This conviction seems to me entirely mistaken. I take Foucault's refusal to indulge in utopian thinking not as sagacity but as a result of his unfortunate inability to believe in the possibility of human happiness, and his consequent inability to think of beauty as the promise of happiness. Attempts to imitate Foucault make it hard for his followers to take poets like Blake or Whitman seriously. So it is hard for these followers to take seriously people inspired by such poets -- people like Jean Jaures, Eugene Debs, Vaclav Havel, and Bill Bradley. The Foucauldian academic Left in contemporary America is exactly the sort of Left that the oligarchy dreams of: a Left whose members are so busy unmasking the present that they have no time to discuss what laws need to be passed in order to create a better future.

MPP5-791 FOUCAULT'S THEORY OF POWER IS A COUNTERPRODUCTIVE THEOLOGY

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.95.

The ubiquity of Foucauldian power is reminiscent of the ubiquity of Satan, and thus of the ubiquity of original sin -- that diabolical stain on every human soul. I argued in my first lecture that the repudiation of the concept of sin was at the heart of Dewey and Whitman's civic religion. I also claimed that the American Left, in its horror at the Vietnam War, reinvented sin. It reinvented the old religious idea that some stains are ineradicable. I now wish to say that, in committing itself to what it calls "theory," this Left has gotten something which is entirely too much like religion. For the cultural Left has come to believe that we must place our country within a theoretical frame of reference, situate it within a vast quasicosmological perspective.

MPP5-792 FOUCAULDIAN REJECTION OF HUMANISM IS POLITICALLY DISABLING

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.37.

The Foucauldian Left represents an unfortunate regression to the Marxist obsession with scientific rigor. This Left still wants to put historical events in a theoretical context. It exaggerates the importance of philosophy for politics, and wastes its energy on sophisticated theoretical analyses of the significance of current events. But Foucauldian theoretical sophistication is even more useless to leftist politics than was Engels' dialectical materialism. Engels at least had an eschatology. Foucauldians do not even have that. Because they regard liberal reformist initiatives as symptoms of a discredited liberal "humanism," they have little interest in designing new social experiments.

MPP5-793 DERRIDA'S THOUGHT IS POLITICALLY DISABLING

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.96-7.

But I have also urged that insofar as these antimetaphysical, anti-Cartesian philosophers offer a quasi-religious form of spiritual pathos, they should be relegated to private life and not taken as guides to political deliberation. The notion of "infinite responsibility," formulated by Emmanuel Levinas and sometimes deployed by Derrida -- as well as Derrida's own frequent discoveries of impossibility, unreachability, and unrepresentability -- may be useful to some of us in our individual quests for private perfection. When we take up our public responsibilities, however, the infinite and the unrepresentable are merely nuisances. Thinking of our responsibilities in these terms is as much of a stumbling-block to effective political organization as is the sense of sin. Emphasizing the impossibility of meaning, or of justice, as Derrida sometimes does, is a temptation to Gothicize -- to view democratic politics as ineffectual, because unable to cope with preternatural forces.

MPP5-794 PREOCCUPATION WITH VIETNAM DISABLES THE LEFT

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.38.

In the remaining lectures I shall be contrasting the Deweyan, pragmatic, participatory Left as it existed prior to the Vietnam War and the spectatorial Left which has taken its place. One consequence of that disastrous war was a generation of Americans who suspected that our country was unachievable that that war not only could never be forgiven, but had shown us to be a nation conceived in sin, and irredeemable. This suspicion lingers. As long as it does, and as long as the American Left remains incapable of national pride, our country will have only a cultural Left, not a political one.

MPP5-795 ALTERNATIVES ARE NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE POLITICS

Richard Rorty, professor of philosophy, University of Virginia, *ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY*, 1998, p.104.

The voting public, the public which must be won over if the Left is to emerge from the academy into the public square, sensibly wants to be told the details. It wants to know how things are going to work after markets are put behind us. It wants to know how participatory democracy is supposed to function. The cultural Left offers no answers to such demands for further information, but until it confronts them it will not be able to be a political Left. The public, sensibly, has no interest in getting rid of capitalism until it is offered details about the alternatives. Nor should it be interested in participatory democracy -- the liberation of the people from the power of the technocrats -- until it is told how deliberative assemblies will acquire the same know-how which only the technocrats presently possess. Even someone like myself, whose admiration for John Dewey is almost unlimited, cannot take seriously his defense of participatory democracy against Walter Lippmann's insistence on the need for expertise.

MPP5-796 RORTY'S ABANDONMENT OF OBJECTIVE TRUTH MEANS ANYTHING GOES

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.155.

But this is not to deny that an essential segment of human experience (both scientific and nonscientific) depends on the assumption that there is, at some fundamental level, a meaningful correspondence between our understanding of reality and reality itself. It is not, as Rorty intimates in his relativizing polemic against mirror imagery, as if anything goes.

MPP5-797 RORTY CAN'T EFFECTIVELY ARGUE THAT TOTALITARIANISM IS WRONG

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.156.

In the course of his plea for a disenchanted, contextualist, "post-Philosophical" culture, Rorty insists: "when the secret police come, when the torturers violate the innocent, there is nothing to be said to them of the form, 'There is something within you which you are betraying. Though you embody the practices of a totalitarian society which will endure forever, there is something beyond those practices which condemns you.'" But here one gets the impression that Rorty has too readily become a prisoner of his own epistemological cynicism. One need be no less skeptical than he about the prospects of deterring torturers by recourse to rational argument to grant that there is indeed something "beyond those practices" that condemns them: the nonempirical idealizations of an ethos of "justice" that have become part of a (counterfactual) universally shared, post-totalitarian moral ethos. The self-justifications of torturers and inquisitors become self negating as soon as they are put into language: for they fail to measure up to the context-transcendent, moral idealizations inherent in the linguistic expectations of a post-traditional culture based on universalizable -- hence, non-particularistic -- norms. According to this logic, as soon as such particularistic worldviews partake of the language-game of "justice and validity" a necessity for all modern, as opposed to traditional despotisms -- they have lost -- which does not of course mean that they automatically cease to exist.

MPP5-798 RORTY'S RELATIVISM DEFENDS THE INQUISITION AGAINST GALILEO

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM*, 1994, p.9.

The strong whiff of mystery-mongering here is reinforced by the parallel with contemporary theologians who take comfort from any hint that science has to acknowledge limits to its present powers of explanatory grasp. In fact the honourable term 'sceptic' is wholly misapplied to a thinker such as Feyerabend who would champion Cardinal Bellarmine and the Church authorities against the upstart heretic Galileo, or to those who -- following Rorty -- regard the issue between them as merely a matter of alternative metaphors, one of which (the heliocentric model) just happens to have won out and thus set the agenda for subsequent 'scientific' thought. That these ideas enjoy widespread popularity among cultural theorists is more a symptom of their scientific ignorance -- or of the current state of play in inter-departmental politics -- than a sign that we have now matured, as Rorty would have it, into an attitude of healthy scepticism vis-a-vis the grandiose delusions of an earlier time.

MPP5-799 RORTY'S THOUGHT IS SOPHISTIC

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.153.

Rorty's penchant for paradox and provocation cannot help but remind one of the sophists of fifth-century B.C. Athens against whose adeptness at making the weaker argument appear to be the stronger Socrates dedicated his exemplary life. At the same time, this tactic moves him to the defense of not a few rather unwholesome points of view -- for example, that of the Italian Cardinal Bellarmine in his criticisms of Copernican heliocentrism. Of course, Rorty, as a self-satisfied, ethnocentric Westerner, is quite pleased that Copernican standards of rationality eventually triumphed. The rhetoric of science "has formed the culture of Europe. It has made us what we are today." Nevertheless, Rorty inquires, "Can we really find a way of saying that the considerations advanced by Cardinal Bellarmine -- the scriptural descriptions of the fabric of the heavens -- were 'illogical or unscientific?'" In essence, "no," he responds: "To proclaim our loyalty to these distinctions [between what is scientific versus what is unscientific] is not to say that there are 'objective' and 'rational' standards for adopting them. But here, Rorty gives up the fight too quickly. And in doing so, he makes things too easy for himself -- and for us.

MPP5-800 RORTY'S THEORY OF TRUTH IS MISGUIDED

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.154.

And in this respect, Rorty's profound aversion to strong, context-transcendent claims to truth is misguided. This is true, ironically, even if one accepts the same pragmatic definition of truth to which he incessantly appeals. For one need only demonstrate the untenability of the idea of the absolute insularity/impermeability of context, on which Rorty bases his strong case for cultural relativism, and the entire argument for cultural incommensurability (which is most likely based on a faulty understanding of Wittgenstein's notion of "language-games" or "forms of life") disintegrates. Thus, given the only standards on the basis of which we might judge -- those of the rules of public argumentation and reason -- Cardinal Bellarmine was, in a far from trivial sense, indeed "illogical and unscientific"; a claim that could be upheld regardless of whichever side of the dispute happened to factually triumph. Ironically, it is precisely this case that seriously undermines Rorty's efforts to banish all representational claims to truth. For Copernicus is "right" precisely insofar as his account is superior in virtue of the way things really are.

MPP5-801 RORTY TO THE CONTRARY, THERE ARE OBJECTIVE TRUTHS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.153-4

For whatever relative merits Rorty's argument might have (certainly, our criteria governing what counts as scientific, as Thomas Kuhn has pointed out, have changed over the course of time and are still changing) seem ill-served by the example he has chosen: despite all the Kuhnian talk about "paradigms," there can be no denying the "objective fact" that the earth indeed revolves around the sun; that water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen; or even that a great European conflagration took place between 1939 and 1945. Nor would such "facts" be in any way altered if the scriptural cosmology of Cardinal Bellarmine had won the day.

MPP5-802 THE REPRESENTATIONAL THEORY OF TRUTH IS VALID

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.154.

Hence, Rorty's attempts to banish once and for all the correspondence theory of truth, to have quit with all species of metaphysical realism, seem (at least in this and similar instances) ill-conceived and precipitate. His thinking displays a confusion between epistemology and ontology: between how we know that something is and that it is. In this sense, even if we cannot convincingly give an account of the former, we can, it seems, point to a wealth of everyday, nonscientific practices that would literally collapse were they to be suddenly deprived of the basic assumption of metaphysical realism -- the existence of an independently existing, external world. Thus, there exists a mass of everyday circumstances and disputes that can only be resolved (or, as the case may be, begin to be resolved) by recourse to a conventional logic of empirical verification that presupposes some notion of correspondence: whether or not a student has turned in a paper on time; whether or not the bridge I am crossing is structurally sound, and so forth.

MPP5-803 RORTY IS AN IRRATIONALIST

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.159-60.

Of course there is the option of rejecting such merely institutional subject-boundaries, and deciding (like Rorty) to treat 'philosophy' as just one voice in the post-modern liberal consensus. But this amounts to a form of 'irrationalism' in precisely Derrida's sense of the word: a retreat from the principle of reason which renders theory incapable of grasping or indeed resisting its effects. It is significant in this connection that Rorty holds William James and John Dewey to be the strongest, most consequent of pragmatist thinkers in the native American tradition. He is less enthusiastic about C.S. Peirce, mainly on account of Peirce's belief that every intellectual discipline requires some ultimate cognitive faith, some idea (as Peirce expressed it) of 'truth at the end of enquiry'. To Rorty this seems a regrettable instance of the pragmatist breaking faith with the perfectly adequate standards of relevance or interest provided by his own cultural time and place. Peirce is depicted, with a certain pitying fondness, as having fallen back into bad ('epistemological') habits of mind, habits which his stronger contemporaries -- Dewey especially -- managed to renounce once and for all.

MPP5-804 EVEN RORTY CAN'T ESCAPE TRUTH CLAIMS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM, 1992, p.162.

Yet to claim that the ideal of rational justification can never provide us with an unproblematical ground of justice and truth is to miss the point. For we are still faced with the task of providing "good reasons" to support our convictions and beliefs. Indeed, even Rorty, in his guise of anti-philosopher, constantly appeals to such principles of argumentation in order to make his self-professed epistemological behaviorism seem more convincing, more plausible -- and, ultimately, more "true."

MPP5-805 RORTY CAN'T TRANSCEND FOUNDATIONALISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM, 1992, p.155.

But not even Rorty can get around the fact that this is an essentially foundationalist claim about the nature of contexts. His argument about contexts is based on a context-transcendent -- hence, quasi-metaphysical -- presupposition about the nature of contexts, all contexts: that they are insular, self-enclosed, and impermeable. But it is very doubtful that such a claim could withstand sustained empirical scrutiny. Can we really say in advance and with certainty that disputes between worldviews or cultures do not admit of adjudication by rational argumentation that aims at agreement? In the last analysis, Rorty remains a prisoner of precisely that epistemological tradition he seeks to expose. For he, too, must posit an absolute claim about the nature of knowledge as such (that it is contextual, self-referential, etc.) in order to uphold his critique of epistemological realism. He believes, erroneously, that he can step out of the language-game of philosophical truth-positing, whereas his only hope for success lies in besting others who have played it according to their own rules. And these rules presuppose standards of "universal agreement and validity" to which Rorty, as a philosopher making arguments, must himself implicitly appeal.

MPP5-806 RORTY'S THOUGHT IS COMPLETELY RELATIVIST

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM, 1992, p.152.

The central antifoundationalist maneuver of Rorty's treatise is a rejection of all claims to universal and objective value. The logical consequence of this move is the adoption of a thoroughgoing relativism -- which Rorty (and here, one can only admire his consistency) freely embraces. Relativism is not as bad as it seems, Rorty informs us; for it is, after all, conducive to tolerance. But Rorty cannot have it both ways. Once all claims to universal value have been discredited, how can we justifiably praise tolerance as the one value that has survived the skepticist onslaught? Here, too, Rorty is consistent. Tolerance, he is forced to admit, has no higher moral status than intolerance. His own preference for tolerance is just that, a "preference" or a "decision." All attempts to inscribe this principle objectively in the "natural order of things," as seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophers of natural right sought to do, are bound to fail.

MPP5-807 RORTY'S PREFERENCES ARE SIMPLY SUBJECTIVE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.152.

Rorty has nothing to fall back on but his own parochialism, something he does with increasing frequency: as someone raised in a bourgeois, Western environment, tolerance is a value he happens to like. But the fact that he and other members of these societies incline in such a direction says nothing about the objective worth of this value. Indeed, were one to attempt to convince, e.g., a member of the Hindu caste system or an Islamic mullah of the "objective superiority" of this and other Western ethical precepts, one would abruptly realize the inherent limits of one's own way of thinking. Rorty thus reiterates for our benefit the arguments of another accomplished metaphysical dragon-slayer, David Hume. According to Hume, our morals are merely a product of custom and habit; but for the sake of our own convenience, out of a narcissistic impulse that seems endemic to every culture, we choose to stylize them as "universal" as a way of enhancing our own self-importance.

MPP5-808 PRAGMATIST MORALITY SIMPLY UPHOLDS THE STATUS QUO

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.165.

But it does not require much philosophical sophistication to see that this precept is essentially a vindication of moral complacency: it is a functionalist definition of truth that confers philosophical legitimacy on whatever beliefs happen to be dominant. Admittedly, if one lives in a cultural environment in which toleration and respect for the rights of others are the rule, one can't stir up too much mischief by following this maxim. Conversely, if one hails from a milieu in which the persecution of minorities and the suppression of free speech are deemed "good" (from the standpoint of majority interests or for the sake of the preservation of political order), one is deprived, from the standpoint of Rorty's neopragmatist contextualism, of the conceptual means necessary for a moral indictment of such practices -- Western-type moral criticisms simply do not happen to coincide with what is "good to believe" in these particular contexts. "Pragmatist morality" is thus a contradiction in terms. In its scorn of universal moral principles -- in the sense of maxims that could be freely or consensually adhered to by all those who would be subject to their influence -- it ends up as a de facto justification of the empirical moral practices that are currently prevalent.

MPP5-809 RORTY'S RELATIVISM IS ULTIMATELY CONSERVATIVE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.155.

The example of the Cardinal Bellarmine/Copernicus dispute is significant insofar as it is emblematic of one of the major deficiencies of Rorty's narrowly contextualist version of neopragmatism: by entirely ceding the power of "right" or "normativity" to context, he studiously ignores the context-transcendent powers of reason and critique, and thereby ends up with a de facto endorsement of an essentially neoconservative position: "what is real is rational, what is rational is real." For, according to this way of thinking, there is nothing de jure that could transcend what is given to us de facto.

MPP5-810 RORTY'S RELATIVISM IS A REGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM*, 1994, p.73.

The point is well made (albeit unintentionally) when Richard Rorty entitles one of his essays 'Nineteenth-Century Idealism and Twentieth-Century Textualism'. In fact Rorty's purpose is to praise the latter movement for possessing the courage of its textualist convictions, for renouncing all ideas of truth, reason, interpretive fidelity etc., and for thus winning through to a 'strong-revisionist', standpoint never quite attained by its historical precursor. But the title takes on a more pointed negative significance in light of those failings and retrograde symptoms that Habermas remarks in the current post-structuralist recycling of idealist themes. It then becomes clear that, so far from representing an advance beyond that old (subject-centred or epistemological) paradigm, new textualism is a thoroughly regressive movement of thought, one that remains captive to the same antinomies without even perceiving this to be the case.

MPP5-811 RORTY'S PHILOSOPHY IS MORALLY COMPLACENT

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.162-3

A self-avowed parochialism such as Rorty's risks both arrogance and moral complacency. Rather than taking the "other" seriously and attempting to hammer out some middle ground for the sake of mutual understanding, other points of view may be simply dismissed on the basis of their dissimilarity. For example, the so-called communitarians pose a major challenge to Rorty's self-satisfied liberalism with their claim that the type of individual produced under Rorty's model -- for the most part, smug, egoistic, self-seekers -- falls short of a nobler, more positive ideal of the human self -- for example, MacIntyre's criticism that the major character types produced under late capitalism are "the Rich Aesthete, the Manager, and the Therapist." There is no way that Rorty can rebut these charges, so he chooses simply not to answer them. Thus, instead of acknowledging the possible deficiencies of the liberal model, Rorty practices a strategy of avoidance: his philosophical framework, which has already ruled out the possibility of addressing questions of truth, deems all questions concerning an "ideal self" likewise illegitimate: "Accommodation and tolerance must stop short of a willingness to work in any vocabulary which one's interlocutor wishes to use, to take seriously any topic which he puts forward for discussion," Rorty confesses -- in what surely must be one of the strangest characterizations of "tolerance" on record. In certain cases, he continues, we must "simply drop questions and the vocabulary in which these questions are posed."

MPP5-812 RORTY NEEDLESSLY REJECTS UNIVERSAL STANDARDS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.152-3.

That is, one can be a nonrelativist, a believer in rationality and truth, without being a metaphysician or a foundationalist in the traditionalist sense, a possibility that Rorty refuses to consider. One can certainly talk justifiably about the "universality" of certain Western values (as Max Weber did) -- of the rational concept, methods of scientific discovery, human rights, and even Rorty's "tolerance" -- without falling back on specious metaphysical claims that such ideas are somehow God-given or rooted in a transhistorical human essence. Instead, it is possible to argue that in the various spheres of human endeavor -- scientific, ethical, political -- certain institutions and principles that happened to originate in the West represent the most "efficient" or "just" means of solving problems, and that they have been recognized as such increasingly even by cultures with opposed fundamental value structures. Hence, if one wants to master nature efficiently, one has recourse to the methods of Western science. If one wants to criticize tyrannical forms of government, one has recourse to theories of justice and human rights. Similarly, if one wants to convince readers about a given theoretical or practical stance -- as does Rorty -- one employs the customary procedures of rational argumentation. In an important sense, the superior "rationality potentials" of these various methods of solving problems have received a type of universal approbation.

MPP5-813 RORTY IS UNABLE TO ADVANCE RADICAL PLURALISM

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.7-8.

Rorty is an advance over Lyotard if only because he recognizes that the problem of relativism belongs to a paradigm inconsistent with the commitments of the postmodern thesis. However, Rorty also believes that ironism engenders certain difficulties: most notably he is concerned to save certain liberal humanist values. His attempt at reconciling ironism or pluralism with liberalism leads him into deep inconsistencies, the most unfortunate of which is his rejuvenation of the public/ private distinction. This distinction does violence to all that is visionary in pluralist politics. Rorty represents what Michael Walzer has called "American pluralism." His analysis disperses power to individuals and groups but is then recentralized; power is regathered at the focal point of "we liberals," a category that is merely a substitute for the traditional locus of sovereignty. He is thus unable to remain true to the radical pluralism demanded by his postmodern commitments.

MPP5-814 RORTY'S PHILOSOPHY PRODUCES PASSIVE CITIZENSHIP

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.167-8.

Rorty gives a new lease on life to the notion of passive citizenship. Professional politicians and social engineers are to manage the ship of state. All that remains for members of the demos is that we privately cultivate our gardens. We are left with the isolated and monadic joys of "aesthetic self-creation" simpliciter. The "solidarity" that appears in the title of Rorty's book (*Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*) is a grotesque misnomer. Not only can the values of publicness, fraternity, and participatory democracy not be deduced from his negative definition of freedom ("cruelty is the worse thing we can do"); the rigid separation he wishes to maintain between philosophical reflection and politics, as well as the kindred claim that the values of self-realization and authenticity have no place in the sphere of public life, in fact militate against the attainment of meaningful collectivities,

MPP5-815 RORTY'S POLITICS ARE PROFOUNDLY CONFORMIST

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.167.

By imperiously consigning the social philosophies of, for example, Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, Weber, Gramsci, Arendt, Habermas, and so forth to the proverbial dustbin of history -- at least insofar as their "public" importance is concerned -- Rorty's neoliberal panacea, "negative freedom," betrays a profound underlying social conformism. It is as if once formal equality has been assured, nothing further is left to be publicly said or debated. It is as though Rorty really believed Anatole France's maxim, "Capitalism is democratic: it forbids to rich and poor alike the right of sleeping under bridges."

MPP5-816 RORTY'S VIEWS UNDERMINE PROGRESSIVE SOCIAL CHANGE

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.164.

At the risk of uncharitableness, one is tempted to say that Rorty's rejections on the tasks of political thought today constitute an elaborate exercise in bad faith. For even if one accepts his philosophical starting point -- the rejection of all suprahistorical conceptions of reason -- one is by no means driven to the timorous, neoliberal apologetics that Rorty freely embraces. Instead, there is ample space within the liberal-democratic tradition for criticism of those empirical bourgeois institutions whose honor Rorty wishes to safeguard at all costs. For the constitutions of these societies all enunciate ideal claims to freedom, egalitarianism, and happiness that are to be realized -- however imperfectly and counterfactually -- in the institutional life of those societies. And it is precisely the fruitful tension between the "ideal" and the "real" that is the driving force behind all progressive social change. But this distinction remains imperceptible from the standpoint of Rorty's framework.

MPP5-817 RORTY JUST OFFERS AN APOLOGY FOR THE STATUS QUO

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.163.

In a recently published response to Rorty's essay, Richard Bernstein has remarked that for Rorty, the idea of tolerance "is close to indifference"; that Rorty's emphasis on "play" and "light-minded aestheticism" is ultimately "facile"; that his conception of liberalism is woefully simplistic in view of the complexity of historical and contemporary debates over the heritage of this concept; and that, in the end, his defense of liberalism offers little more than "an apologia for the status quo." Finally, upon considering Rorty's glorification of the "liberal ironist" as the quintessential modern character type, Bernstein suggests that "when we turn to Rorty's attempt to privatize irony, to encourage the playing out of private fantasies, it is difficult to understand why anyone who becomes as narcissistic as Rorty advocates would be at all motivated to assume public responsibilities."

MPP5-818 RORTY'S PHILOSOPHY LEADS TO POLITICAL PASSIVITY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.151-2.

Might one not, without too much strain, view Rorty's work as performing an intellectual function analogous to that of Bell's book some twenty years earlier? Is it not a saga of disillusionment concerning the utopian mission of thought-to-know things as they ultimately and truly are -- and a sober admonition for us to rest content with the inevitably partial, relative, and parochial character of even our deepest intellectual insights? In a word, isn't there something profoundly neoconservative about Rorty's philosophical program? In the last analysis, isn't his historicist-inspired credo -- viz., the relativist conviction that all truth is ultimately a phenomenal manifestation of the historical-intellectual matrix in which it originates -- extremely resigned and quietistic? Is it not a philosophy of "adjustment," decidedly appropriate for an age of "retrenchment" and "lowered expectations"? One arrives at these conclusions, ironically, merely via a consequent application of Rorty's historicist methodology to his own thought -- by historicizing his historicism, as it were.

MPP5-819 RORTY SIMPLY GLORIFIES THE WORLD AS IT IS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.160-1.

Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature has been the object of a number of pointed critiques, many of which have accused Rorty of implicitly promoting a neoconservative worldview. He has responded, in turn, in a number of essays and books that have attempted to provide a more favorable account of the political implications of his metaphysical agnosticism, but the results have been less than persuasive." The problem is that in his consequential efforts to do away with context-independent, nonrelativist truth claims, Rorty leaves himself, so to speak, without a critical leg to stand on. His position is a self-professed contextualism, whose absolute point of departure is society as it is presently ordered. And because of his neonominalist distrust of any standpoint that might transcend the nature of contemporary bourgeois America -- Rorty's absolute, ethnocentric point of reference -- his position turns into a de facto glorification of the world as it is. Rorty is constantly telling us that his rejection of first philosophy means that now political principles and convictions must be gleaned from the actual practices of contemporary (American) society, rather than from ethereal philosophical treatises. But ironically, this is not how he himself proceeds. In traditional fashion, he has written his own book on "first philosophy" (albeit a type of anti-epistemology) and then has attempted to come up with a political theory to fit his philosophical conclusions.

MPP5-820 RORTY HAS STRONG AFFINITIES TO NEOCONSERVATISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.151.

That Rorty's book was so phenomenally successful may have been at least partially conditioned by a number of extra-philosophical, contextual factors. Indeed, the book's main thesis concerning the definitive obsolescence of all strong claims to truth is strikingly reminiscent of a book with a parallel thesis that had an analogously controversial impact in the early sixties: Daniel Bell's *The End of Ideology*. Bell's thesis, which is by now well known, alleged that advanced industrial societies were witnessing an ultimate dis-illusionment with "utopian political claims" (read: "Marxism"), and that in their stead, a mentality prizing technocratic/managerial efficiency (which was purportedly non-ideological) had come to prominence. Indeed, in a recent paper on the "Priority of Democracy to Philosophy," Rorty includes a flattering reference to Bell's theory, as well as a ringing endorsement of the profoundly conformist, neoconservative implications of the argument in general: Rorty's ideal polity, like Bell's, "will be a society that encourages the 'end of ideology,' which takes reflective equilibrium as the only method needed in discussing social policy."

MPP5-821 RORTY FAILS TO ACHIEVE AN EFFECTIVE POSTMODERN POLITICS

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.63.

The fact that Rorty is not able to view the public and the private as being distinctions institutionalized for the purposes of hegemonic regimes shows that he is unable to combine politics with pluralism and is evidence of one more failure of the attempt at a genuine instantiation of postmodern politics. I agree that giving up the vocabulary in which worries about relativism make sense is a necessary step in achieving such a goal. But equally necessary is the removal of any attempt to bifurcate the public and the private -- indeed, insisting on the ubiquity of the political is crucial in achieving a postmodern and oppositional politics.

MPP5-822 RORTY'S SPLIT BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PRESERVES OPPRESSION

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.63.

Freeing the "private" from the private, making it susceptible to political critique, public-critical reflection (an oxymoron on Rorty's terms) and political debate, thereby making the larger society amenable to change in directions which accommodate the demand of those who feel themselves institutionally marginalized, is one necessary step in the formation of oppositional politics. A theory like Rorty's, which institutionalizes the public/private split, institutionalizes marginalization and therefore oppression. Consensus which is formed within a public sphere distinct from the "private" is indeed terroristic.

MPP5-823 RORTY'S VIEWS ARE CLASSIST AND SEXIST

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.63.

The point is that those interactions which classical liberalism considers private are power-laden and political, and the "solidarity" which Rorty's bourgeois liberalism assumes to be theory neutral is in fact theory laden -- it speaks for a particular class -- and gender-biased perspective. Rorty's partisan position, which is his last word on the reconciliation of pluralism with politics, is glaringly ill suited to serve the goal of demarginalization. Demarginalizing those whose concerns are other than the capitalist bourgeois liberal's is coincident with politicizing those voices who have been institutionally kept within the sphere of the private, either through their class, sex, sexual preference, or education. Rorty poeticizes what needs to be politicized.

MPP5-824 RORTY SILENCES RADICAL PERSPECTIVES
Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.62.

Such a notion of solidarity depoliticizes the concerns of anyone who speaks with a voice other than that of the bourgeois liberal. In aligning theory on the side of the private, concerns with collective life on the side of the public, and keeping in mind that the ironist, whose realm is the private, is cast as the reactive, Romantic hero, Rorty's partisan position ensures the political impotence of radical discourse and the political dominance of the bourgeois liberal. It makes non-liberal, oppositional discourses non-political by definition ... Political discourse in fact is restricted by Rorty to those who speak the language of bourgeois liberalism.

MPP5-825 RORTY IS OVERLY ELITIST

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.53.

Let me expand on the implications of his claim that non-intellectuals are not raised to play the language game necessary to critical reflection and imaginative identification. In making this claim, Rorty is both institutionalizing the specialness of the ironist intellectual and defending a society which promulgates the segregation and hegemony of language games. He writes: "in the ideal liberal society, the intellectuals would still be ironists, though non-intellectuals would not" (CIS 87). This statement is not just quaint, it is also dangerous, for it gives voice and the critical tool of reflection, the possibility of questioning and therefore of resistance or of bringing about change, only to the ironists.

MPP5-826 RORTY INSTITUTIONALIZES DOMINATION

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.54.

The distinction between the ironist intellectual and the non-intellectual serves then as a means of oppression. And I find this very dangerous indeed. If the means to recognize the source of the beliefs one holds are institutionally placed beyond the reach of, or kept from, the majority of the population, then so too is the possibility of questioning and therefore of resistance. The chances of meaningful resistance are further limited because while Rorty's ideal is that doubts about the public rhetoric of the culture are only legitimate where they can be met with "concrete alternatives and programs," he would have society structured in such a way as to have already limited the imaginative capabilities of the non-ironists, thereby ensuring the institutionalization of ignorance or submissiveness. To anticipate my discussion of Foucault, Rorty aids in the construction of the domination of normalizing and disciplinary regimes.

MPP5-827 RORTY'S POLITICS ENTRENCH HIERARCHY
Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.50.

I shall argue that in the end the separation of the public and private spheres cannot be reconciled in the way Rorty wishes. But more important, I shall argue that Rorty's insistence on the distinction of the public from the private undermines the usefulness of his notion of community or solidarity because his public/private distinction lends itself to hierarchy and claims to sovereignty, and so does not allow for the fluidity of the public space which attention to difference demands. Finally, Rorty's surprising revitalization of a common human essence, revealed, he thinks, by our agreement that humiliation is the worst form of cruelty, makes his politics not simply misguided, but insidious.

MPP5-828 RORTY'S LIBERALISM IS A FORM OF TERROR

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.44.

Rorty would seem to be an advance over Lyotard if only because he rejects these dichotomies. I will argue, however, that he does so unsuccessfully; his pluralism rejects relativism at the expense of a kind of cavalier elitism, and his politics makes room for solidarity only by imposing a form of terror; his public/private distinction forces the notion that only one form of political discourse, the liberal democratic one, is valid.

MPP5-829 RORTY UNDERMINES RADICAL POLITICS AND CRITIQUE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS, 1994, p.63.

This point could also be put in Fraser's terms: in confining his notion of solidarity to the collective concerns of the bourgeois liberal, Rorty gives us "no possibility for a genuinely radical political discourse rooted in oppositional solidarities;" but an adequate notion of Politics must be able to accommodate "radical discourse communities" that contest dominant discourses (Fraser 105). I would add, it must also be able to distinguish dominant from subordinate solidarities; totality must not be universalized. Rorty's partisan position neither engenders solidarities, nor can it offer a critique of power (much less a critical reflection on its own power biases).

MPP5-830 RORTY UNDERMINES THE SPIRIT OF CRITICISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.163-4.

It is hard to disagree with Bernstein's conclusions, especially when, while reading Rorty, one comes across sentences such as these: "There seems no particular reason why, after dumping Marx, we have to keep repeating all the nasty things about liberalism he taught us to say. . . ." Or again: "We should be more willing than we are to celebrate bourgeois capitalist society as the best polity actualized thus far," as "the best example of solidarity ... we have yet achieved." Philosophy, and the spirit of criticism that is its *raison d'être*, which in the eighteenth century laid the foundations for a global assault against despotic forms of government, have been reduced by Rorty to the insular role of buttressing "the hopes of the North Atlantic bourgeoisie." If the late Hegel was the philosopher of the Treaty of Vienna, Rorty has become the philosopher of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

MPP5-831 RORTY'S THOUGHT DOESN'T HELP IN CONFRONTING PARTICULAR PROBLEMS

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.160.

The problem is that Rorty writes as if any philosophic attempt to sort out the better from the worse, the rational from the irrational (even assuming that this is historically relative) must lead us back to foundationalism and the search for an ahistorical perspective.... He keeps telling us that the history of philosophy, like the history of all culture, is a series of contingencies, accidents, a history of the rise and demise of various language games and forms of life. But suppose we place ourselves back into our historical situation. Then a primary task is one of trying to deal with present conflicts and confusions, of trying to sort out the better from the worse, of focusing on which social practices ought to endure and which demand reconstruction, of which types of justification are acceptable and which are not. When confronted with such questions and themes, all Rorty has to offer us is the resignation of the traditional philosophical skeptic who wears his epistemological perplexity like a scout merit badge. As Hegel realized, we are left with a situation in which "the fear of falling into error sets up a mistrust of knowledge itself." But as Hegel rejoins appropriately: "Should we not be concerned as to whether this fear of error is not just the error itself?"

MPP5-832 RORTY'S POLITICS ARE UNILLUMINATING

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.159-60.

For just when things begin to get interesting, when therapeutic philosophy has accomplished its defetishizing mission and the project of philosophical reconstruction promises to get underway, Rorty leaves us in the lurch. When it comes to addressing the question of how we are to go about reconstituting the relationship between philosophy and public life, between our "considered convictions" (Rawls) and our inherited "forms of life" (Wittgenstein), Rorty has very little to say to us -- apart from a timorous reaffirmation of the basic tenets of bourgeois liberalism.

MPP5-833 RORTY REMAINS OVERLY INDIVIDUALISTIC

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.61.

Rorty's blindness to this point is evidence of his (ironism notwithstanding) entrenchment in the Anglo-American tradition, which is staunchly individualist. It sees the self as being fully human only to the extent that he or she is a participant in the public realm, but the presupposition of that participation is the independent and autonomous citizen. This notion of autonomy is a holdover from the modernist tradition, which should have been repudiated by the poststructuralist/ironist theorist. Rorty's assumption that there is a private self which can be formulated independently of the public one neglects the social origins and implications of the self. It also neglects the political dimensions of the self, since, I would argue, that thesis which insists that the self is culturally or socially constructed cannot ignore the fact that the cultural and the social are themselves constructed within the stakes of power. This is not just Foucault's insight, it is also the lesson of the social movements of the last century.

MPP5-834 RORTY WRONGLY REJECTS POLITICAL THEORY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.168.

Rorty's desire to eliminate social theory from public discourse cannot help but strike one as one of the more peculiar -- if not outright "illiberal" -- features of his neopragmatism. One may grant that it expresses an appropriate disillusionment with the brand of nonfallibilistic philosophical posturing that usually subtends political messianism, a legacy that must be rejected. I agree with anti-Marxist writers such as Popper and Kolakowski," Rorty once remarked, "that the attempt to ground political theory in overarching theories of the nature of man or the goal of history has done more harm than good. We should not assume that it is our task, as professors of philosophy, to be the avant-garde of political movements." But it is hardly the case that all, or even most, modern social philosophy -- that of Arendt, or Habermas, or Michael Sandel, for example -- is or has been messianic in tenor. Hence, wherein lies the imperative for excluding their strong, yet fallibilistic claims -- which have often been quite critical of inherited "liberal" political paradigms -- from the domain of public discussion? What act of hubris has impelled Rorty, a self-professed liberal ironist, to proclaim that some 2,500 of Western political thought has been suddenly rendered obsolete?

MPP5-835 RORTY'S APPROACH ULTIMATELY UNDERMINES LIBERALISM

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.55-6.

Rorty's view being presented in this section, namely that Romanticism and liberalism are easy bedfellows, is also defended by his claim that irony or aesthetic play will not only be consistent with, but will promote, liberal values such as kindness, decency, tolerance, and a loathing of cruelty. He believes this is consistent with his view that humiliation is the worst form of cruelty we can effect on one another (which will be a claim I will call into question). Indeed, some private poems might be consistent with these ideals. But will all? Here my worry is that far from being a knight of liberal values and social hope, the true fact of the matter is that the ironist and the aestheticized society is antithetical to just those things. This is because as Rorty presents them, the task of the strong poet is the "devaluation of values," and this is, in fact, inimical to his erstwhile defense of liberalism.

MPP5-836 RORTY'S VIEW OF SOLIDARITY IS UNACCEPTABLE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.70.

Furthermore, I would add that this position denies that solidarity can be based on critical reflection, since critical reflection is the sole property of the ironist. But then the "solidarity" Rorty is presenting us with is unacceptable, for in denying the non-intellectual the possibility of critical reflection, it denies oppositional politics, one of whose goals is creating the conditions under which marginalized groups can form their own identities, its most essential tool.

MPP5-837 RORTY'S RELATIVISM PROVIDES WEAK PROTECTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Ronald Slye, Associate Director, Center for International Human Rights, Yale Law School, *FORDHAM INTERNATIONAL LAW JOURNAL*, 1995, p.1576.

On the other hand, Rorty's view is terrifying in certain respects. Recognizing that humans are malleable, we can no longer draw comfort from traditional notions of a fixed human nature. Instead, we must confront the terrifying fact that humans are capable of endless transformation. Just as they can increase the human rights culture, so can they diminish it.

MPP5-838 RORTY'S VIEW OF JUSTICE IS AHISTORICAL

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.67-8.

But the radical pluralism which follows upon his irony ought to force Rorty to recognize that any solidarity which is conceived of as an absence of difference is invalid according to the precepts of pluralism: there is no "us" -- in the sense of something which forms a core identity to which conflict is absent, a core which is static and unchanging -- ranging over difference. But I find such a recognition to be missing. Despite his insistence that his notion of solidarity is non-metaphysical, it nevertheless cannot make sense without his understanding of a common human essence (and here I am reminded of Lyotard's need for a justice beyond justice): the core of each self reveals a "moral subject," e.g., "something which can be humiliated" (CIS 91). Such a notion of moral progress is ahistorical, and so violates one of the central canons of pluralism.

MPP5-839 RORTY IS ETHNOCENTRIC

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.69.

Rorty claims that what counts as cruelty or injustice is a matter of the language spoken. But then it would seem that we cannot help speaking of otherness in our own terms, and this necessarily does violence to that otherness. This seems inevitable unless there is one language we all speak. But such essentialism is denied the ironist. In summary, the fact that Rorty's liberalism is ethnocentric, that it harbors unacceptable metaphysical foundations, that humiliation is an example of such a bias and is also ethnocentric and does not speak to a common human pain, that humiliation is, furthermore, a material and not a formal concept, and finally that the language of the novelist or ethnographer does not speak for or to a common human experience, are all evidence of my claim that the constraints Rorty's liberalism places on self-creation amount to a form of cultural imperialism.

MPP5-840 RORTY DEFENDS A FORM OF CULTURAL OPPRESSION

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.66-7.

Rorty feels that the dissemination of rich European and American culture amounts to "moral progress." But in all of this his liberal ideals cannot mask its endemic hegemony -- a form of oppression which moreover does not even take into account the diversity or plurality of its own culture. Rorty seems impervious to the fact that the people living in European or American democracies are not all rich, not all liberal, and do not even necessarily feel themselves to be given genuine democratic options. The "we" Rorty speaks to is much smaller than he imagines -- and it is just this fact which makes his liberalism and the subordination of the private pluralist projects to public liberal goals so unacceptable to those searching for a politics of difference. It may also indicate the limit of his philosophical interest for those of us who do not buy into his biases for he seems to be speaking only to those who, like himself, are predisposed toward the ideals of bourgeois liberalism.

MPP5-841 RORTY'S POLITICS ARE TOTALIZING AND CULTURALLY IMPERIALISTIC

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.44.

Thus, although Rorty might at first seem to offer us a workable postmodern politics because he claims to succeed where Lyotard could not -- he claims to be able to retain a notion of radical plurality necessary to the postmodern aesthetic and a concept of solidarity that I claim is necessary to political theory -- in fact his vision of postmodern politics fails as well. Rorty is subject to a form of the same charge he levels against Lyotard: if Lyotard's project fails because it is unable to give up the modernist demand for legitimation, Rorty can be charged with being unable to give up the modernist demand for totality. I shall argue that Rorty's idea of solidarity harbors that which Lyotard warns against in his discussion of consensus, namely a kind of universalizing of totality which amounts to terror. Insofar as this is the case, he can, in line with a Lyotardian critique, be viewed as an apologist for cultural imperialism. Rorty's vision of politics cannot serve oppositional politics.

MPP5-842 RORTY'S VIEW IS ULTIMATELY ETHNOCENTRIC

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, *TRUTH AND THE ETHICS OF CRITICISM*, 1994, p.15.

This point about the limits of relativist thinking can be made in various ways. Some philosophers -- Donald Davidson and Hilary Putnam among them -- have responded with a form of the Kantian 'conditions of possibility' argument, in this case designed to bring out the kinds of self-disabling paradox (or performative contradiction) to which such ideas fall prey. Hence Putnam's demonstration, contra Rorty, that what starts out as an attitude of easygoing tolerance for the range of human cultures, lifestyles or 'final vocabularies' may yet end up by adopting a stance of likewise genial but none the less deep-laid ethnocentrism.

MPP5-843 RORTY'S VIEW OF WESTERN INSTITUTIONS IS NAIVE

Honi Fern Haber, Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, Denver, *BEYOND POSTMODERN POLITICS*, 1994, p.69.

To conclude: universal concepts, be they morality, rationality, subjectivity, decency, or humiliation, have force only so long as what marks us out as being the individuals we are is ignored. And they are all, I would argue, politically dangerous concepts in that their supposed neutrality always masks a particular, non-universal, political agenda. This is clear in the case of Rorty, who blithely defends the institutions of Western democracies, even if they entail oppression, on the ground that such institutions lessen cruelty and suffering. This is, I claim, a naive view.

MPP5-844 RORTY IS THOUGHT IS SHALLOW AND NARCISSISTIC

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.158-9.

Rorty's thought thus risks becoming a philosophy appropriate to the shallow narcissism of an era that refuses to be convinced that its precursors had something important to say. Its credo is a pathetic and timorous hedonism, in which matters of philosophical conviction are reduced to considerations of taste." It is after all Rorty's own text, and not just the imagination of this writer, that is teeming with dinner-party metaphors. As he observes, "the point of edifying philosophy is to keep the conversation going. . . ." He defines "philosophical progress" as the capacity "for human beings to do more interesting things and to be more interesting people." Whereas formerly philosophers naively occupied themselves with the search for truth, they must now become "generators of new descriptions," seekers of "new, better, more interesting, more fruitful ways of speaking." The post-Rortian philosopher is a passionate advocate of "free and easy conversation," a self-professed "post-modern bourgeois ... ready to offer a view on pretty well anything." He (or she) is a self-satisfied "name-dropper" who uses these names "to refer to sets of descriptions, symbol-systems, ways of seeing."

MPP5-845 RORTY'S PHILOSOPHY IS ALIENATING AND TRIVIALIZING

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.158.

Rorty constantly tells us he is trying to free us from a number of stifling metaphysical prejudices. But to what end are we to be freed? And do we really want Richard Rorty as our liberator? At the risk of ingratitude, I'd like to suggest that were Rorty's notion of edifying philosophy to become hegemonic, we would in fact be worse off. For in his cheery American debunking of the spirit of philosophical seriousness, he essentially leaves philosophy without substance, without any higher aims. As a result, his thought comes close to becoming a "have a nice day" philosophy tailored to suit the needs of a postmodern era, in which we react with relief at no longer having to confront the intellectual responsibilities of earlier epochs -- responsibilities that revolve around our capacity to make "strong evaluations." It is an era which, according to Fredric Jameson, is dominated by a hypernестhetized sensibility in which the distinction between "appearance" and "essence" has been effaced, resulting in an overidentification with mass media-engendered simulacra -- that is, with the illusion-proffering powers of the "culture industry." In consequence of this situation, we have, as it were, even lost the capacity to feel our own alienation.

MPP5-846 RORTY'S THOUGHT IS OVERLY DUALISTIC

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.157.

Rorty's book revolves around a central binary opposition: that between "objective" philosophy (which is bad, serious, and exclusionary) and Rorty's own conception of "edifying" philosophy (which is good, playful, and open). But, as is the case with all such oppositions, by virtue of their rigidity, they commit a serious injustice at the expense of their lesser term. We still stand to learn much from the doctrines of those systematic philosophers on whom Rorty heaps so much opprobrium -- Plato, Descartes, and Hegel. Rorty concedes that after the revolution of the "edifiers" has been completed, we would still read the others. But I suspect we would not read them much differently than we do at present and as they have been read for quite some time.

MPP5-847 RORTY'S POSITION UNDERMINES RATIONAL CRITIQUE

Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p. Christopher Norris, Professor of the History of Ideas, University of Wales, DERRIDA, 1987, p.157

Thoroughgoing pragmatists like Rorty and Lyotard reject the principle of reason and argue that knowledge can only be assessed according to its practical or 'performative' effects. But this denial ends up in Rorty's case by producing a consensus view of truth which simply reaffirms the current self-image of 'North Atlantic bourgeois liberal' culture. There are two things wrong - intellectually and politically wrong - with a pragmatist position like this. It ignores the extent to which reason, in its various practical or technocratic forms, has shaped every aspect of Western experience and so -- inescapably -- set the main terms for debate. And it also falls to see that this experience can only be grasped by a critique that upholds the values of enlightened reason, even while seeking to diagnose their present repressive or distorting effects. For Derrida, those effects are very precisely located in the discourse of legitimizing power and knowledge whose history is to be read in the texts of a philosophical tradition extending from Plato to Husserl and beyond. Simply to reject that tradition -- thinking to occupy a whole new domain of 'post-modern' cultural debate -- is effectively to give up any hope of informed rational critique.

MPP5-848 RORTY HAS TO RESORT TO LABELLING HIS OPPONENTS AS CRAZY

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.162.

Hence, Rorty is merely being consistent (that is, consistently ethnocentric) when, disregarding his cherished maxim of tolerance, he expresses the conviction that in our model liberal-democratic polity, "there is no place for the questions which Nietzsche or Loyola would raise." For they are not sufficiently like us in terms of their political preferences (one cannot help but wonder what other intellectual nonconformists will be next added to the list). "We heirs of the Enlightenment," Rorty continues, "think of enemies of liberal democracy like Nietzsche or Loyola as ... mad." Since Rorty has already eliminated considerations of truth or justice as atavistic "pseudo-concepts," he must resort to the clinical notions of madness and sanity to characterize his political opponents.

MPP5-849 RORTY CAN'T EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO
COMMUNITARIANISM

Richard Wolin, Professor of Modern European Intellectual History, Rice, *THE TERMS OF CULTURAL CRITICISM*, 1992, p.161.

This group, which includes thinkers such as Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, and Charles Taylor, is often referred to as the communitarians. They pose an interesting dilemma from the standpoint of Rorty's framework. Whereas they, like Rorty, reject ahistorical theories of truth, nevertheless, unlike Rorty, they are anything but apologists for the status quo. Instead, their work has been the source of some of the most trenchant social criticism of recent years. While their respective positions are in truth diverse, they all attempt to measure contemporary liberal, possessive individualist societies against various historically derived notions of community; and, according to this standard, they find these societies highly wanting. But Rorty hardly knows what to do with these theorists. The fact that they are able to offer intelligent, immanent social criticism while abandoning a universalist perspective makes them an immediate threat to his own complacent contextualism. It is not so much the specific content of their various criticisms that poses an immanent threat to Rorty's framework. It is the fact that, while rejecting ahistorical standards of criticism, they possess something that Rorty does not: a point of view.